



Senior class council near final choice for speaker

Kofi Annan, Queen Noor were among names on original list

By HEATHER BARBAKOFF
News & Features Editor

The Senior Class Student Council is in the final stages of choosing a commencement speaker and will announce its selection next week, according to members of the council.

The original list of candidates included such names as Queen Noor of Jordan, former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, according to a senior member of the council, who spoke anonymously because the negotiations were private.

"They were non-polarizing people who had made contributions to and had backgrounds in global issues. We wanted to find someone who had a charitable, humanitarian background and they fit that description perfectly," said the member of the council.

Those candidates were ultimately scrapped for various reasons, which the members declined to discuss.

Senior Class President Natasha Singh would not disclose the identity of the final candidate, saying only that he was not on the original list that included Annan and Greenspan.

"We are still in negotiations for who we think the final speaker will be, and

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Univ. has no plans to divest from Sudan

Despite growing number of peer institutions that have adopted formal policies, Hopkins has not considered officially divesting from war-torn region

By LENA DENIS
News-Letter Staff Writer

Johns Hopkins has no plans to join the more than 50 universities that have formally divested from Sudan, despite a bloody ethnic conflict in that country's Darfur region that has killed at least a quarter of a million people.

As the international community increases its pressure on the Sudanese government to end what human rights groups and the United States government have called the "genocide" in Darfur, colleges and universities across the country have pulled their investments from companies that do business in Sudan.

Although Hopkins claims it has no investments in Sudan, it has not adopted a formal policy banning such investments on ethical grounds, nor has it made information regarding such investments public.

"The fact that we were not invested in those companies is not based on a decision-making process of the social re-

sponsibility of those investments," said University spokesman Dennis O'Shea.

"The University's belief is that there is no financial incentive to invest in the companies doing business in Sudan. Given that fact, there is no need to even discuss the question of whether investments in those companies are a good or

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Homewood by Candlelight



CONOR KEVITT/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

David Hildebrand, a faculty member at Peabody, played an array of period reproduction instruments during the "Homewood by Candlelight" event.

Clarke reflects on a year of battles and successes

By MING WEN
News-Letter Staff Writer

If election victories are any indication of success in politics, then Mary Pat Clarke must be doing something right. The Councilwoman for the 14th district, which includes Homewood and Charles Village, was re-elected in September with 94 percent of the vote.

However, Clarke is not popular among many Hopkins students, particularly because she supports proposals that strictly enforce city noise ordinances.

As this year's city council session draws to a close, the *News-Letter* spoke with Clarke about her relationship with the University, what it was like to run for office as a woman in the 1970s and her plans for the coming year.

News-Letter: How did you get involved in politics?

Mary Pat Clarke: I ran for city council in 1975. I had been president for a while, director of greater Homewood Community Corporation. I was involved with a number of neighborhoods in Baltimore and it sort of naturally led for running for office.

NL: What was it like, running for office?

MPC: In those days there were very few women in elective office. The hardest part was to persuade people to vote for a woman. People weren't used to women candidates.

When I was elected to the city council, there were only three women out of 19 mem

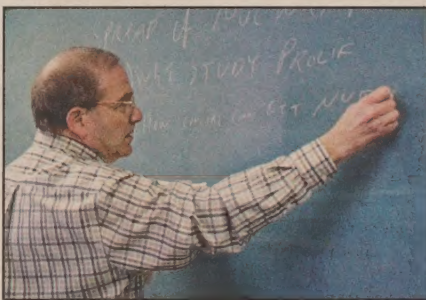
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Students, faculty react to Md. peace talks

By PAYAL PATNAIK
News-Letter Staff Writer

If last week's Middle East peace conference in Annapolis proved anything, it's that Israel and Palestine are like a divorced couple living in the same house.

That's what Steven David, director of the International Studies program at Hopkins, said at a talk on the conference last week.



FILE PHOTO

Steven David spoke about the recent peace conference.

His was just one of the many opinions held by Hopkins faculty, students and national experts about the conference, held at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. last week.

According to James Lindsay, a visiting fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, there is at least one consensus view regarding the conference: Many are relieved to see the process rebooted after such a long interruption.

In a series of meetings on Nov. 27, President Bush began talks with Palestinian and Israeli leaders for the establishment of a peace settlement; the talks were between Bush, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime

Minister Ehud Olmert.

On the Homewood campus, students gathered to hear International Studies program director Steven David give a talk about the Annapolis peace conference. He briefly described the history of tension between the two groups in addition his elaboration of the issues at stake addressed at the peace conference.

David opened the discussion saying, "The first thing we have to do is recognize that there is a right and a wrong on both sides, so essentially we're looking at right versus right."

He described the sense of loss that the Palestinians have felt and their want for their own country, while Israel has strong religious ties, and as the only Jewish state, is "central to Jewish identity."

The two sides of the conflict have caused the two societies to grow in parallel without much interaction but with much tension.

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Despite Clinton commitment, health forums slow to attract

By MARIE CUSHING
News & Features Editor

Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.) is one of three presidential candidates who have recently agreed to discuss their positions on health care with University President William Brody in a series of televised forums.

But a condensed primary schedule with frontloaded elections has made it more difficult to attract the leading candidates in both parties.

"We are making steady progress," Brody said.

Brody has already filmed discussions with former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, a Republican and former Alaska Sen. Mike Gravel, a Democrat.

Former Governor Mike Huckabee (R-Ark.), Clinton and Sen. Joe Biden (D-Del.) have agreed to participate in the forums but have not set a specific date for the filming of these discussions.

"Obviously we'd like to be further along," said Michael Field, an assistant to Brody who has been involved in the forum planning process.

None of the recorded sessions have been broadcast. While there is no air-date announced, "the target is two weeks from now," Field said.

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Candidate Hillary Clinton has agreed to participate in a forum with Hopkins President William Brody.

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Quakers give friendship a whole new meaning

By PAYAL PATNAIK
News-Letter Staff Writer

Johns Hopkins was one. William Penn was another. So were Betsy Ross, Elizabeth Blackwell and James Dean.

Each of these famous figures belonged to the Religious Society of Friends. Commonly known as Quakerism, this Protestant denomination is centered around, as members of the Homewood Friends Meeting put it, truth, integrity, simplicity and equality.

"We just have a really strong history based on the strong leadership that develops out of giving people their own way in life and not putting so much pressure on people to conform," senior Jason Goldman-Petri said.

The Homewood Friends Meeting-

house is located on North Charles Street in a quaint brick building that holds a library and a meetinghouse. The building was originally planned to seat 300 people for the Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. But now the Baltimore Yearly Meeting has moved elsewhere and the Homewood branch has a little over 100 members.

Under the leadership of George Fox, Quakerism took root in 1650s England. The term "Quaker" comes from when Fox was taken to court to answer for his unorthodox views.

He reportedly told the judge to tremble and quake at the word of the Lord. The judge derisively asked Fox if he was a quaker, but Fox proudly acknowledged the term and the name has stayed with the group ever since.

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FILE PHOTO

The Homewood Friends Meetinghouse is where Hopkins Quakers gather.

NEWS & FEATURES

Increase found in class sizes in certain dept.

By HUSAIN DANISH
News-Letter Staff Writer

Professor Marc Greenberg watches over 300 students file in one by one. Every Monday at 9:50 a.m., the Organic Chemistry I lecture in Hodson 110 is packed. By 10 a.m., Greenberg begins his lecture. Most of the students have arrived by now, although a few students straggle in.

For the next 50 minutes, Greenberg lectures to one of the largest classes on campus.

This is a scene that repeats over and over again everyday on college campuses across America.

The National Center for Academic Transformation estimates that the 25 most common college courses — particularly the introductory courses in science and mathematics — account for 35 percent of four-year college enrollment. This means that large portions of college students are taking relatively few classes.

With nationwide college enrollment expected to increase to 20 million within the next eight years, it seems this situation is unlikely to change.

"I certainly think that, at least in research universities like Johns Hopkins, large classes are here to stay," said Steven David, head of the International Studies program and professor in the political science department.

According to Dean of Undergraduate Education Paula Burger, 11 percent of classes offered at Hopkins enroll more than 50 students. Two-thirds of courses, however, have fewer than 20 students.

Introductory class enrollments have increased dramatically over the last few years. In fall 2005, 957 students were enrolled in introductory math courses. In two years this number has increased to 1,106 students.

During the same time, the



Hodson 110 is best known as a frequent host to large introductory lectures that have more than 300 undergraduates enrolled.

math department has also seen an increased student-teacher ratio. In 1977, there were 16 math professors and 2,100 students enrolled at Hopkins. In 2007, there were 24 math professors and 4,478 students enrolled.

"I have only been here for six years," Greenberg said. "However, my colleagues tell me that the number of students enrolled in organic chemistry has increased. Last year there were approximately 290 students in my section of organic chemistry. This year there are approximately 315 students."

"I have been teaching Contemporary International Politics for over 20 years now," David said. "It has been well over 200 students for many years."

The issue has gained attention by the professors and individual departments. However, there is little that can be done to decrease class sizes.

"We would love to reduce

class sizes for a number of reasons," said Dr. Richard Brown, head of the math department and professor for Calculus II for Physical Science and Engineering Students. "However, the fact that courses are taught by professors, and the number of professors we have here is limited, I am not sure how we can reduce class sizes."

Some departments have tried to cap the number of students allowed in each course. Dr. David Smith, head of the Writing Seminars department, capped each Introduction to Fiction and Poetry class at 17 people.

"When I became chairman of the department I had to find a compromise between the impulse to help and the need to effect the best size for the sort of individual teaching Introduction to Fiction and Poetry requires," Smith said. "I therefore permitted courses to increase to 17, and that is the current maximum."

It is, of course, too large for the best practices but economies of size are part of the life we all live, and compromises must be made."

But this is not an option for all departments. The math department maintains a policy that no student can ever be denied access to any course given during the semester. This eliminates the possibility of reducing class sizing by simply capping the

number of students.

Some large introductory courses could be broken up into smaller lectures, but this too has its disadvantages.

"If, for example, I broke up my class and taught in the fall and spring semesters, I couldn't teach any small advanced courses," Smith said. "Sure, I will reduce class size from 200 to 100 students possible, but will that really make any difference?"

While introductory courses tend to be very large, upper-level courses tend to be much smaller. Upperclassmen tend to have greater interaction with their professors.

The biggest complaint by students in these courses: the lack of interaction between professors and students.

"It's almost impossible to ask questions in my physics class," said John Henry, a freshman majoring in civil engineering.

Another unfortunate side effect of large lectures is that students are more willing to skip class.

"The introductory courses tend to have a lot of students," said Shekeab Jauhari, a junior physics major. "The professors tend to provide alternative resources, like recorded lectures, as a result. This encourages students not to go to class."

This, however, does not dissuade the professors from teaching their courses.

"I try to present lectures where I have something to say," David said. "It is their [students'] choice whether to come or not. In a way, I am there to convince them to come."

The majority of students, however, don't mind.

"It really doesn't make a difference to me," said freshman Carolyn Yi, an art history major.

Univ. looks to increase corporate investments

By PATRICIA PUGH
News-Letter Staff Writer

In the interest of raising more investment funds from large corporations, the University has decided to create a new position for managing corporate relations for all Hopkins schools and hospitals.

Such a position has not existed at the University for the last six years. Meanwhile, corporate giving has reached a plateau in comparison to peer institutions.

"While some of the divisions have sought corporate support for priority needs, there has not been a central institutions-wide focus on corporate fundraising," said Debbie Perrone, director of corporate and foundation relations.

The new director of corporate relations will be in charge of increasing investment dollars for Johns Hopkins from some of the country's largest corporations by enhancing mutually beneficial partnerships between these companies and the University. "They're so large," said Fritz Schroeder, the senior associate vice president of development and alumni relations. A new position was necessary to oversee the increasingly complex relationships between big businesses and academia.

According to Schroeder, the new director will be a "broker" of sorts who can manage the often diverse interests that corporations have in forming financial partnerships with major research universities. It will provide a more comprehensive way of for Hopkins and its corporate donors to relate to one another.

"Some divisions have established strong relationships with specific corporations, we look forward to building new partnerships with companies that might have broader institutional interests as well," Perrone said. This initiative is part of a larger trend in which corporations are becoming increasingly strategic in their giving to universities and other nonprofits. According to Schroeder, corporations are commonly interested in funding scholarships and, especially, research projects.

This allows them increased opportunity to hire students out of college, garner knowledge of scientific and technological breakthroughs and serve their philanthropic interests by supporting public health and disease, research or environmental projects.

By creating this position, Schroeder said, "We can better address their multiple interests through creating stronger partnerships."

When corporations give money to Hopkins, they want to serve both their business and charitable interests. A large and academically diverse research university such as Hopkins presents them an ideal opportunity to do so.

"We match up their interests with opportunities we have," Schroeder said.

According to CURRENTS, the magazine of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), corporate donors today are seeing their donations less as gifts and more as investments.

"Increasingly, we view spending as investing, and we expect a decent return on our invest-

ment," wrote John Pulley in an article for the September 2007 edition of CURRENTS.

Data collected in the Voluntary Support for Education Survey by the Council for Aid to Education shows that total contributions from corporations and their foundations to higher education increased by 4.5 percent from 2005 to 2006.

Some have questioned whether research could be "bought" at Hopkins. However, Schroeder said that "there are very much checks and balances that would prevent outside organizations from having undue influence" on research projects. University policy stipulates that review processes must take place before research grants are sought to prevent conflicts of interest.

Corporate-targeted development does go hand-in-hand with forming corporate partnerships.

"They are one and the same," said Aris Melissaratos, senior advisor to the president for enterprise development.

"Development offices see an opportunity to create partnerships that are lasting and identify packages of research that may appeal to some of the corporate leaders." Corporate leaders want to fund projects that will serve their dual humanitarian and business objectives.

"We do work with the top companies, particularly on the medical side," Melissaratos said. These primarily include pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies that sponsor research projects and have licensing deals with the University in which products of academic research are incorporated into their products. According to Melissaratos, this has been going on for a long period of time. The Development Office is simply seeking to expand and improve what has already been happening.

The new position of director of corporate relations is expected to be filled by no later than March 1 of next year. The individual to be hired ideally would have both fundraising and corporate experience.

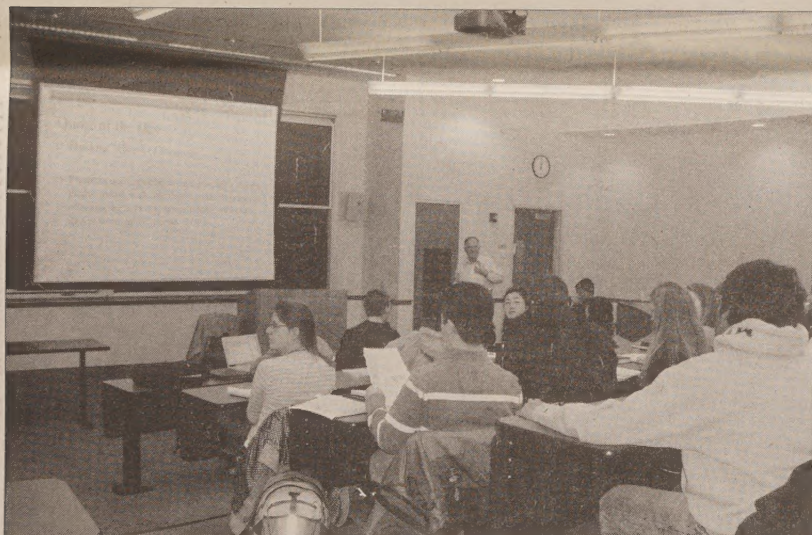
"We want them to have sat on both sides of the table," Schroeder said, as well as to have a "broad variety of understanding" of all academic areas and an ability to work closely with faculty undertaking research in all departments.

"Once the new director is hired, one of his or her priorities will be to document the full scope of existing relationships," Perrone said.

This development has arisen in the midst of a major fundraising campaign launched on July 1, 2000. The goal is to raise \$3.2 billion by December 2008. As of October 2007 the campaign has brought in \$2.9 billion.

The creation of this new fundraising position is reflected in the larger context of the need to raise an additional 300 million dollars by the official end of the campaign. Fundraising at JHU is not set up so that donations are channeled into a "common fund" for the to be distributed as necessary.

Rather, it is the donors who must specify how their money will be spent. This is why, despite having raised \$2.9 billion in the past seven years, Hopkins cannot automatically use some of the money for a much wished-for tuition decrease.



CONOR KEVIT/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

The student to teacher ratio in the mathematics department has grown more imbalanced in the last 30 years.

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Hopkins students get out on the runway for a good cause

By ALEX VOCKROTH
News-Letter Copy Editor

Do charity by working it on the catwalk? For a select group of Hopkins students in the Glass Pavilion Tuesday night, that was exactly what happened.

On Dec. 4, the Hopkins student group Vision XChange held the Hopkins Top Model competition to "stop the poppy economy" in Afghanistan by raising money and awareness for the cause.

Vision XChange has been working to draw attention to international issues for the last three years. Salmah Rizvi and Shruti Mathur co-founded the organization, through the Center for Social Concern, hoping to enhance public knowledge

about issues often overlooked by the media and other charities.

"We try not to do anything that's too politically heavy, but at same time we want to do something about awareness," Rizvi said.

To accomplish this goal, Rizvi and Mathur decided to combine learning and fundraising with fun. Each event benefits a different cause, and the events aim to be engaging and exciting.

"There's a lack of events that are fun and still promote a cause," Rizvi said.

With Hopkins Top Model and other programs like it, Vision XChange can teach about an important issue while also entertaining an audience.

"Everybody doesn't read the paper, everybody doesn't look at the news, so [this event] gets people there, and then while they're there, they learn," said freshman Vision XChange volunteer JR Smith.

Hopkins Top Model was the first event Vision XChange organized upon its founding, and Tuesday's competition marked the third annual Top Model show. Since that first year, though, it has been a great success on campus.

"We started our organization, and within

three weeks we put on Hopkins's first Top Model, which sold out," Rizvi said, adding, "We've been putting in more and more effort ... to make each program better."

University President William Brody was in attendance as a judge for the contest. He told the *News-Letter* he was proud of Vision XChange for their humanitarian efforts and inspired ideas.

"It's a great opportunity for students to come together and think about the world, and have fun at the same time," he said.

This year's contest was organized to raise awareness about Afghanistan's problematic opium economy.

The nation produces 93 percent of the opium that is sold worldwide, making it extremely profitable to terrorist regimes that own a substantial amount of arable land in Afghanistan. Thus, the poppy economy provides great financial support for insurgent groups.

Because opium cultivation monopolizes the Afghan economy, many children and adults receive little or no education, and instead spend their lives working to farm and sell opium.

Vision XChange will donate all of the night's proceeds from the Top Model competition to Afghan Red Crescent, an organization that creates "marastoons," institutions that teach a variety of trades, for those tied to the opium business.

With a new skill, like embroidery or carpentry, these people can then support themselves and their families without relying on opium.

In addition to ticket sales, Vision XChange conceived another clever way to raise funds for Afghan Red Crescent.

Between competition rounds, shoeboxes, one for each contestant, were passed around, into which audience members put money for their favorites contestants. The competitors with the most money collected automatically advanced to the next round.

The competition itself consisted



CONOR KEVITT/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Junior Dani Velez and freshman Ashley Aaroe were finalists in the women's portion of the charity catwalk competition.

sisted of three rounds: "Unique Style," "Red & White" and "Formal Wear." Competing were 28 male and female representatives of as many student groups, including people from sports, Greek life, cultural groups and student government. These brave students spent several weeks choosing outfits, rehearsing and even learning how to walk like a model.

All of the contestants were enthusiastic and performed with individual flair. In fact, the night was so entertaining that the charitable reason for it sometimes faded into the background. But the message about the crisis in Afghanistan was reinforced by reminders from Masters of Ceremony Louis Young and Michael Winnet, and through words from William Latimer from the School of Public Health and Afghan refugee Jaheda Hanif.

Co-founder Shruti Mathur, who graduated in 2006 and now

lives in Manhattan, returned to Hopkins to serve on the panel of judges with President Brody and Benedict Dorsey, the senior associate director of the Office of Financial Services.

The members of Vision XChange also expressed their gratitude toward their supporters, public and private, that enabled the event to take place at no charge to the organization.

They singled out President Brody for his continued support of the Vision XChange mission. Brody accepted a plaque from the organization with a little model behavior of his own, shimmying down the runway and flinging his suit jacket into the crowd (and yes, there are photos and video out there).

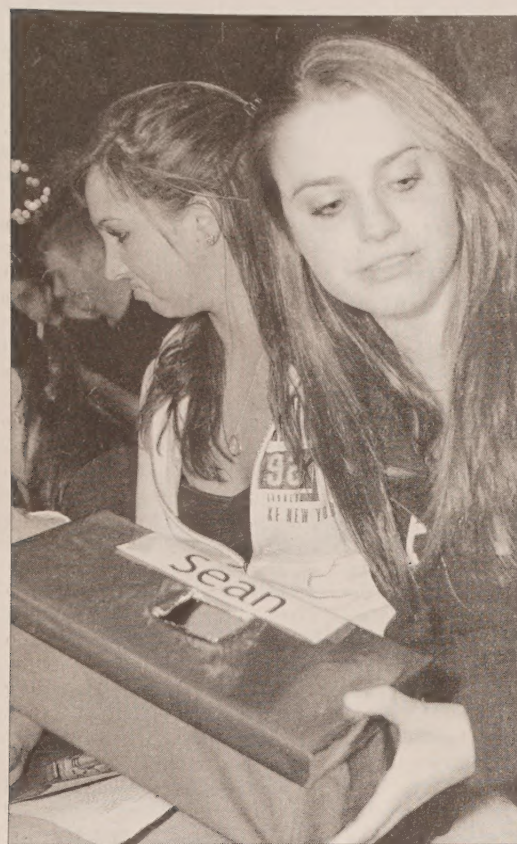
At the end of the night, the votes of the judges were tallied and the shoebox collections were counted to choose the next two Hopkins Top Models. This year's female runway star is junior Materials Science & Engi-

neering major Dani Velez, from Phi Mu. Freshman Pouya Hemmati, from the Iranian Cultural Society, was voted the best male model.

The event attracted a large crowd, making the third annual Hopkins Top Model competition yet another success for Vision XChange. For Salmah Rizvi, a senior, this year's event was particularly special, as it was her last time organizing the event. She hopes that her and Mathur's work will continue in future years.

To make that happen, Vision XChange veterans have been "training new members to take over this organization when we leave because this is exactly what Hopkins needs," Rizvi said.

"We have so many great resources, so many great people, but the only issue is bringing together a diverse group of people and having them do something that's good for the world."



CONOR KEVITT/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

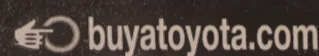
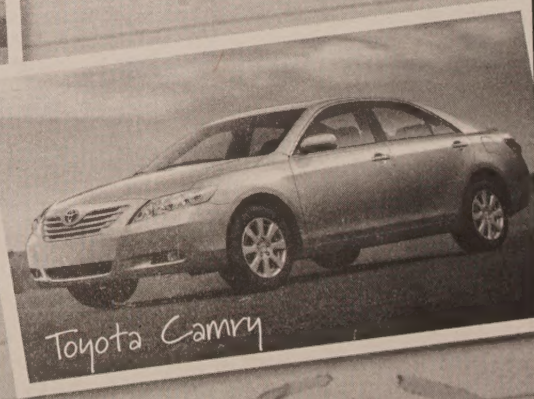
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In the Society of Friends, Things I've learned, with Prof. Tristan Davies

all members are equal

For the Quakers, guidance comes from inside of all members

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1
Quakers believed that God was within every person, which was the essence of their relationship with God. Living in the Spirit was thus sacramental and there was no place for creeds, dogma nor external celebration of sacraments.

Thus, Quakers do not have ordained priests since all are believed to be ministers.

Meetings for worship are conducted in silence to wait for God's guidance, which comes from either stillness of the word of those who are moved to speak.

Nancy Clark, a member of the Homewood Friends Meeting, said of the Friends' philosophy, "We emphasize that of God's presence in each of us and look for it in each other," she said.

Meetings for Worship at the Homewood Friends Meeting are held every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and followed by an informal lunch.

The meeting is unprogrammed, meaning without a pastor. Occasionally, a more organized meeting is held for a holiday service.

The committee of ministry and worship is responsible for guiding the meetings, though they do not conduct the meetings.

The clerk of the meeting coordinates with smaller committees and is selected by discussion.

"It's a time of silence where you're reflecting on the people in your lives and the things that

you're grateful for or even negatively affected [by], such as by a death or illness, and people will walk up to the altar and tell the congregation how they feel about what's been bothering them," Goldman-Petri said.

Goldman-Petri is part of the Free Quaker Meetinghouse in Philadelphia.

According to him, his direct ancestors gave food and blanket to troops that were stationed in Philadelphia.

The Society of Friends that his family was part of viewed the

action as aiding the war effort and kicked them out of that Society of Friends, so his family formed their own meetinghouse.

He said that his personal impression of the Homewood Friends Meeting is that they are more liberal than many other Quaker

churches.

"You have three types of people: You already know people on your side agree with you, it's only going to alienate the opposite side further and for the middle, you might influence them but you might also alienate them and it's not doing anyone good," he said.

Goldman-Petri said that the ideals of Quakerism have helped him daily.

"Quakerism puts more emphasis on moral guidelines, rather than your beliefs. It's really important in that you have strong convictions in your morals," he said.

By SARAH GRANT
News-Letter Staff Writer

In addition to being a Senior Lecturer in the Writing Seminars Department, Tristan Davies is a published author. Anticipating the release of his upcoming book, *Forecast*, Davies talked to the *News-Letter* about his journey as an aspiring writer and those who helped him along the way.

News-Letter (NL): Was there a major turning point — a book, a poem, a person — that inspired you at a young age to pursue writing?

Davies (TD): This is a funny answer, because I remember when *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* came out, the original Roald Dahl, and I remember my mother ordered it and it came in the mail — the first edition, hardcover. I had always followed Roald Dahl books, and I remember cutting and unwrapping the box, and it was the first time I'd ever had a hardcover book that had just come out, and maybe that was the moment. I mean, I guess I'm a geek because I still get excited when the Amazon.com box comes, and there's all the packaging and the shrink wrap piece of cardboard. So maybe that was it; I was about eight or nine. And also, I remember I went to an exhibit of American painting around the exact same time, back then the museum was really just a gallery. They had stuff from the Met and I remember seeing these paintings — and painting was something that was foreign and distant — and suddenly seeing all these American paintings and the American sensibility of these landscapes. It inspired me.

NL: It was inspiring in a generally creative sense?

TD: Yeah, I think so. Well, for the longest time I thought I was going to be the greatest American abstract expressionist painter of my generation. Until I realized that no one had been painting ab-

stract expressionism for about 30 years, so that kind of dashed my hopes.

NL: Who were the your most memorable professors at Brown?

TD: There were a lot. There was a guy named Viktor Terras, was Estonian, a critic, and did Russian stuff, Duncan Smith, who did German, Dora Levy did Chinese. Then there was John Hocks, who was a fiction writer, who was really mean to me. I think if I'm ever nice as a teacher, it's me remembering how mean to me John Hocks was.

NL: What was the worst thing he said to you?

TD: "You should really quit writing," he said. I remember very clearly it was during his office hours. I got into his class as a freshman, to a great deal of resentment among the seniors who were taking it. And about halfway through the semester he took me aside and said, "You seemed to have a lot of promise in the beginning, but I think you should just stop writing." He was tough. I think that most people have been told at one point to stop and quit what they're doing. But the story does have a happy ending. I ended up studying with him again as a senior and became good friends. He was very helpful to me until he died. He became a mentor that did a lot for me, and was an extraordinarily thoughtful, considerate, giving person.

I guess I'm a geek because I still get excited when the Amazon.com box comes ...

— TRISTAN DAVIES

NL: What was the best advice you received as an undergrad?

TD: "Don't become a lawyer!" [Laughs] The guy, he was an anthropologist named William Beaman, and that was the great thing about Comp. Lit, I was encouraged to read internationally. So I ended up reading Chinese, Russian, Estonian, German, Latin American, Caribbean and African literature. There was a Ghanaian man named Anones Gazania who taught West African lit; I studied East African lit with a Malayan poet who was a refugee ... it gave me this incredible appreciation of the breadth of literature. I had that crisis that everyone has, and everyone goes through it, and it usually happens right about now — the fall of senior year — where you say "I've wasted my life, I know nothing, I better go to law school." And I was at a reading and I ran into Bill Beaman and he said "What are you doing?" and I said "I'm going to law school," and he said "Don't go to law school. Every lawyer I know is a glorified bean counter." I think that it was good advice for

me at the time, because it came from somebody I knew and respected, and I think that if someone hadn't said that it's okay not to be a lawyer, I might have been an attorney.

But there was another time when I really did feel lost, and I remember I was with Jack Hocks. I ran into him in the English Department by his mailbox, and he just said walk with me, so I walked him home, and he was just supportive. He cared, listened to what I was worrying about, told me I was thinking too much about myself. But just the fact that he cared, he genuinely cared, and was there to help me meant a lot as a student.

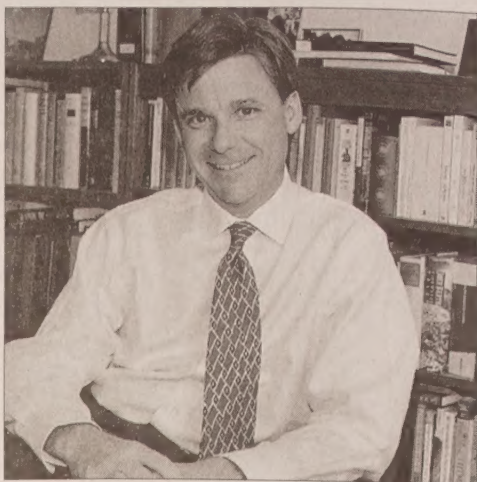
NL: As you were mentioning before about your professors with these far-reaching legacies and stories, weren't they a little intimidating to an aspiring writer?

TD: Well you're right, it is overwhelming, but if you're not awed by it, you're in the wrong racket. And it's a little bit like the paradox in translation: "Either all is lost, or all is translation." You realize that it's impossible to do, but people do it. Once,

I was a grad student and I had dinner with Louis Lamour, and he turned out to be the most interesting, nice, thoughtful guy and had so many great stories. At the end of the evening, he said to me, "Well what do you do?" You know, I was embarrassed to say that I was in this creative writing program because how presumptuous to even suppose to be anywhere near his stature. So I had to tell him I was in the creative writing program, and he put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Stick with it, there's always room in the world for another good writer." I think it's the message I'm trying to convey. There's always room for more, the boat isn't full by any means.

NL: Was there a certain moment at Hopkins where you knew you were on the right track? Thankfully you chose not to go to law school?

TD: Oh, that moment, it comes to a lot of people, and that mo-



COURTESY OF LOUIS ROSENSTOCK
Tristan Davies speaks on his times as a student, writer and teacher.

ment is teaching. I remember the first day of being a T.A., I had this stack of books, I was in the office, running off all these copies of the entirety of Western lit and I'd stayed up half the night writing details for the lecture. And Steve Dixon came in, he only has a paperback and a manila folder on his way to teach, and he says "What are you doing?" And I said "I'm getting ready," and he looked at me askance, and he said "Well, remember to just be yourself, because they'll sniff it out right away if you're putting on an act, if you're trying to be someone you're not."

It suddenly dawned on me that I was trying to be 'Mr. Johnny Hopkins,' and so I walked in and just asked how they [the students] were doing. I remember thinking of the first class I had as a freshman. It was a women's studies class and it was a section, and the T.A., she was this little earthy woman, we all sat down and she said "How's everybody doing?" I was so gassed that the woman said that at the beginning of section — we were at Brown University, studying the history of women, by God!

This was serious [laughs]. And she's asking how everyone's doing? So then I started my first class asking, "How's everyone doing?"

NL: I want to touch on your first collection of short stories, *Cake*, for a bit. It came out in 2003, which is pretty recent. What was the significance of the chronology of your stories?

TD: Well the way I ordered them, it's a very mystical thing. You where a special outfit and a hat. [Laughs] I don't know, I think it generally drifted from the most counter-factual to the most psychologically realistic, if that makes any sense. In other words, the first story is the least purely narrative, and the last is the most narrative.

For more of this interview, visit the *News-Letter's* Web site, <http://www.jhunewsletter.com>

SECURITY ALERTS

Nov. 27, between 9:30 a.m. and 8 p.m.:

A graduate student had his bicycle and cable lock stolen. The investigation is continuing.

Nov. 27 at 7:08 p.m.:

Four juveniles were observed on a CCTV Monitor taking several bricks from a fenced storage area and breaking the side windows of two parked cars. One car's interior had been ransacked and the juveniles fled when the second's car alarm was activated. They fled south off the lot before Baltimore police arrived. The investigation is continuing.

Nov. 27 at 9:30 p.m.:

An undergraduate sitting by himself on the steps of his house was approached by two men; one of the men showed him a handgun and demanded the undergraduate's belongings. They went through the student's pockets and backpack, but didn't take anything. They also ordered the student to lie facedown on the ground and count to 50. One of the suspects kicked the victim and then fled west on East 32nd Street toward North Calvert Street. Both Baltimore and Campus Officers searched the area with no findings. There were no injuries, and the investigation is continuing.

Nov. 28, between 10 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.:

An undergraduate's bicycle and cable lock were stolen from a bench. The investigation is continuing.

Nov. 29 at 5:30 a.m.:

Two undergrads walking in the 3000 block of Hunter Street (an alley) had been approached by two males who had their faces hidden by bandannas. One of the males showed what appeared to be a sawed-off shotgun and demanded money. After taking money from one victim, the suspects fled south in the alley towards 30th Street. There were no injuries; Baltimore police responded and Hopkins security were informed of the incident later that afternoon.

Nov. 30 at 2:30 a.m.:

Three undergraduates reported that they were approached by two males who had left a gray vehicle on the 3000 Block of Guilford Avenue. Both males had their faces covered, one with a red bandana and the other with a black ski mask. One suspect pretended to be armed. After the victims gave up their property, the suspects went back to the grey car and drove south on Guilford Avenue. There were no injuries, the Baltimore police responded and an investigation is continuing.

Nov. 30, at 6:45 p.m.:

An unknown male entered a locked office on the ground floor of Krieger Hall by removing ceiling tiles in the hallway and crawling through the ceiling. When a Hopkins employee entered the area, the suspect fled. Campus officers searched the area and found nothing. Baltimore Police and Crime Lab responded, nothing was taken. The investigation is continuing.

Between Nov. 30 at 4 p.m. and Dec. 2 at 1 p.m.:

A laptop computer was stolen from the top of a Hopkins employee's desk inside an office in the Computation Sciences Engineering Building. The investigation is continuing.

Dec. 1 at 12:25 a.m.:

The Baltimore police arrested an intoxicated undergraduate student for disorderly conduct and failure to obey orders. This student was screaming while he pushed a second student in a wheelchair which had been taken from Union Memorial Hospital. The student, highly intoxicated, had no apparent reason to be screaming and was uncooperative with the police. The wheelchair was returned.

Dec 2 at 1:40 a.m.:

Baltimore Police arrested two robbery suspects who were positively identified by non-affiliated victims of an attempted robbery on 2800 block of North Calvert Street. The victims reported that suspects had approached them and then used a brick to intimidate them when demanding property. A passing cab allowed the victims the opportunity to get away from the suspects. Nothing was taken and the investigation is continuing.

Dec. 2 at 3 a.m.:

Baltimore police arrested two suspects in a stolen grey car on the 2800 block of Guilford Avenue. Investigations found that these suspects were responsible for the Nov. 30 robbery on the 3000 block of Guilford Avenue. There are further investigations ensuing to determine whether the suspects were involved in other robberies in the area.

Dec. 2 at 2 a.m.:

A non-affiliated male reported being robbed at his home by an unknown male. The suspect forced the victim outside to steal his car, but when outside the victim yelled for assistance and the suspect fled. The northern district detectives are investigating.

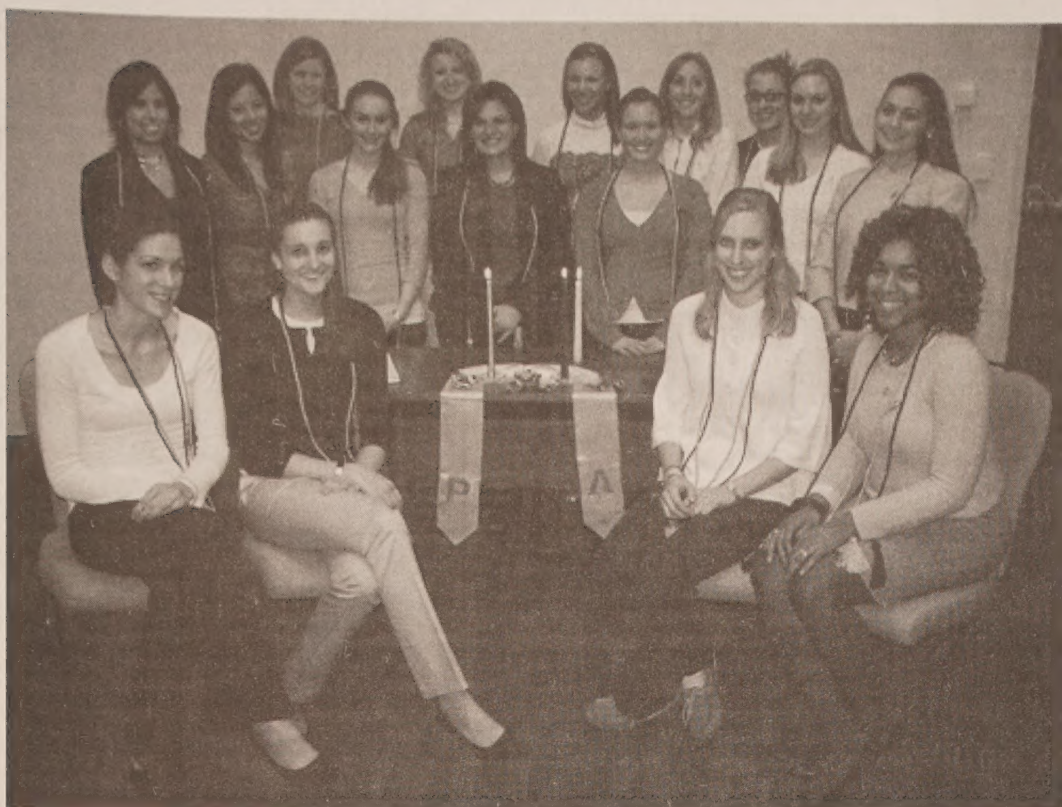
ERRATA

There were no errata reported for this week.



Get breaking news every week courtesy of WJHU and the News-Letter at www.wjhuradio.com or www.jhunewsletter.com/podcasts

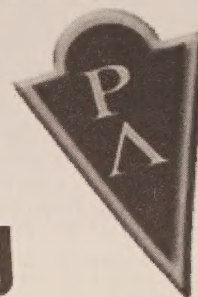
Congratulations Rho Lambda Founding Class



The purpose of Rho Lambda Leadership Recognition Society for Sorority Women is to honor those women within the sorority community who have exhibited the highest qualities of leadership and service to their Greek community and their sorority. They are women who have furthered the ideals and principles of the Greek community throughout their years of sorority affiliation.

Fall 2007 Inductees

Kaylin Beck, Alpha Phi
 Erin Borek, Phi Mu
 Jessica Brociek, Phi Mu
 Jessica Brown, Alpha Phi
 Ashley Carter, Phi Mu
 Nicole Errett, Phi Mu
 Carolyn Lovejoy, Phi Mu
 Megan Maguire, Alpha Phi
 Emma Mann-Meginniss, Kappa Alpha Theta
 Alina Markova, Phi Mu
 Ann Peters, Phi Mu
 Allison Schnidman, Phi Mu
 Leslie Schoeck, Phi Mu
 Anne Smedinghoff, Kappa Alpha Theta
 Ina Soh, Kappa Alpha Theta
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If you have questions, please contact Dean Johnson by phone 410.516.2224 or email rjohnson06@jhu.edu

NEWS & FEATURES

News In Brief

New association addresses concerns of postdocs

Recently, the Homewood Postdoctoral Association was formed to address the common problems of almost 200 postdoctoral fellows living near Homewood.

The group is the brainchild of civil engineering fellow Judith Mitrani-Reiser, who was frustrated with the University's lack of categorization of postdocs with regards to simple issues such as obtaining a parking space or a Hopkins e-mail accounts. Though postdoc fellows are legally students, they come to Hopkins mainly to conduct research and teach classes, making it difficult for the University to offer them necessary services.

The Homewood Postdoctoral Association's goal is to create a sense of community and help foreign postdocs orient themselves in a new environment. Members will also host social and professional events.

The Homewood Postdoctoral Association is the first association formed to address such issues since the Johns Hopkins Medical Center's Postdoctoral Association formed in 1992. The group will host its first meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 12 at 4 p.m.

— Leah Mainiero

Hopkins awards students and faculty with arts-initiative grant

The University is awarding \$26,000 in Arts Innovation Grants to members of the student body and faculty.

Out of 13 proposals, 7 received funding. Three of the proposals were for spring courses. A class on intermedia studio will allow students to create their own intermedia work and present it to the public. A narrative production class will focus on writing



LAURA BITNER/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Dance team JOSH will receive a grant to perform at the Ronald McDonald House.

and producing short narrative fiction films.

Ancient City of the Future will introduce students to computer-generated virtual architecture and Near Eastern urban civilization.

Four grants were awarded to students:

Senior Avantika Mishra, leader of JHU JOSH, will receive funds for her dance team to perform for the Ronald McDonald House. Junior Hernan de Aguila will use his funds to organize a Hopkins Concerto and Aria competition.

Seniors Michelle Brown, Elizabeth Eldridge, Mitch Frank and Julie Shilling will receive funding to create a senior theatre showcase. Senior Kirsu Tuomanen Hill and junior Yoonah Chi will relocate a former Artscape sculpture to the University to enhance studies in contemporary art.

— Leah Mainiero

U Maryland hate crime is part of a semester trend

A message left on a dry-erase board in a University of Maryland

dormitory calling two female roommates Nazis has sparked an investigation by the university police, according to the student newspaper, the *Diamondback*. The two roommates, sophomores Andrea Rothschild and Blythe Dillingham, discovered the message on Dec. 3.

This incident occurred following a string of hate-related crimes on the campus this past semester. Such crimes included a noose hung outside the cultural center and a swastika spray-painted on a parked car.

University police sent announcements regarding this most recent event to all residents of the dormitory notifying them of the incident.

The announcement also asked that any people with information relating to the offense come forward.

Residents of the dormitory were shocked and offended, according to the *Diamondback*.

The spokesman for the University police, Paul Dillon, told reporters that officers were contacted and have started to work on identifying possible suspects and determine their motive.

"These type of things are very difficult to solve if there's no witnesses ... There's no criminal evidence to process," Dillon told the *Diamondback*.

— Sammy Rose Saltzman

Reflections with Councilwoman Clarke

CONTINUED FROM A1
bers. The other two were Mrs. Q. Adams and current U.S. Sen. McCaskill. People didn't know what to call us. We just said to call us councilwomen. Now, of course, many years later, women hold the top four city offices.

NL: Can you briefly describe your term as Councilwoman since 1975?

MPC: I served for eight years (two terms) as a member of the City Council representing the old second district, which is, roughly speaking, from Hopkins Homewood east to Broadway; a very big district.

Around 1980, I was involved with a number of issues. We passed a bill of tenant's rights of first refusal. People renting houses were given the first right to buy the house if the owner decided to sell it. What was happening was that there was an inflationary period in the late '70s when landlords were selling their properties because they could make so much money. We had a lot of people living in the Harwood neighborhood who were renting for years and year and got a note from their landlord saying, "Sorry I sold the house." With this bill ... if you didn't want to buy it, or couldn't afford it, he couldn't sell it to someone else for less money.

I also helped get residential permit parking passed. A neighborhood would petition for permit parking if the majority wants it. They buy a sticker every year. Everyone else without the sticker can park in the neighborhood but only for two hours at a time. That started from a problem at the Union Memorial Hospital where people were taking advantage of parking, so neighbors couldn't park.

NL: What did the City Council accomplish this year?

MPC: We passed a no-smoking ban, and then the state of Maryland followed our lead and passed a statewide ban. Restaurants and bars can't have any smoking after Feb. 1, 2008. That's the most significant legislation because that led to a statewide ban. I supported it.

NL: What were your goals this past year?

MPC: It was the first term in which we had single member

districts. They're smaller than the old council districts, fewer people, about 46,000 people. They have one rep each. Districts used to have three.

One of the things I wanted to do was to help my district get adjusted to this change and get to know [other councilpersons] and get to know each other's issues so people could work together across neighborhood lines. I think the neighborhoods accomplished that. I worked with neighborhoods, the neighborhoods did it, but I've been supportive of those efforts.

Another goal I have and had is to provide more, better, schools and more safety nets and more activities for youth. Extracurricular, athletics, arts, mentoring, the kind of thing they need especially if they're in a single parent family or if their family has problems in providing extra incentives to achieve and be successful.

NL: What do you want to see change?

MPC: I'd like the city to be safer and I'd like to reduce crime. I worked very hard with the city government and my neighborhood to try to do that. It's the major issue along with education. Safety and education: These are major objectives of mine and every member of the city council.

NL: How do you feel about current neighborhood-University relations?

MPC: I was interviewed last week about this issue, but it got a little confusing. I have a few complaints this year about the noise and the parties, but I had a lot of complaints about one block of east University Parkway, the 300 block. In general I had fewer complaints with the exception of the 300 block of East University Parkway. There are several problem properties. There are loud parties late at night, mainly. People get drunk and they're outdoors being drunk.

NL: Do you think relations have improved?

MPC: I guess. I think it's better

than it was. But I still have a number of real problem properties that I can't seem to get a handle on.

NL: What do you think should be done about this issue?

MPC: I guess more University housing. If the University dealt with disorderly conduct by suspending students from school, in other words, if there were academic consequences, it would improve the situation. The University is sup-

posed to be doing that. I hope they are. That's the only thing that's going to work as far as discipline goes. We can send the police, and people are going to get arrested.

What really counts with undergraduates is, does Hopkins

care? If Hopkins does something about it, if Hopkins lets its undergraduates know in meaningful ways that we should be good neighbors that would make an impression on students. Loyola College has had a very strict policy and it's been very successful.

NL: How will the next session of the City Council be different from the one that just ended?

MPC: I think that I have a better focus now on how to go about combating violent crimes. I think we will focus our attention on seeing that strategy through to success. I think we will spend more time working with school systems to improve schools. We have a good superintendent who has worked with us and cooperated with us. The two main issues seem to be on improving. We must develop a full-fledged youth policy for safety and success. Stay tuned.

We need everyone's help. One of the issues is summer employment for our youth program, so that young people have a chance to work instead of hang out and find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time.

NL: Is there anything else that needs to be done?

MPC: We have to make sure we're always doing a good job clearing snow.

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NEWS & FEATURES

Hopkins's high school dropout study draws criticism

By HUSAIN DANISH
News-Letter Staff Writer

Seventeen hundred American high schools are "dropout factories," according to a recent report from the Hopkins Center for Social Organizations of Schools.

The study has been met with considerable criticism. School administrators and educators nationwide have criticized the study for its use of the "dropout factory" label as well as its treatment of local and district enrollment data.

"The city of Trenton is in complete uproar over the report," Lucy Guzmán, a Trenton Central High School board member, said.

"The report has been discussed repeatedly at Board of Education meetings. Superintendents of the high school have taken offense to the term 'dropout factory.'"

Tony Mack, a freeholder of Mercer County, N.J., convened a special meeting to bring attention to all high schools in Mercer County on Saturday Dec. 1.

"Together, we have to figure out how to keep kids in school through to graduation and provide whatever they need, such as protection from harm, vocational and technical education, part-time jobs, tutoring or counseling," Mack said.

No school labeled as a dropout factory in the state of Maryland returned to comment on the report.

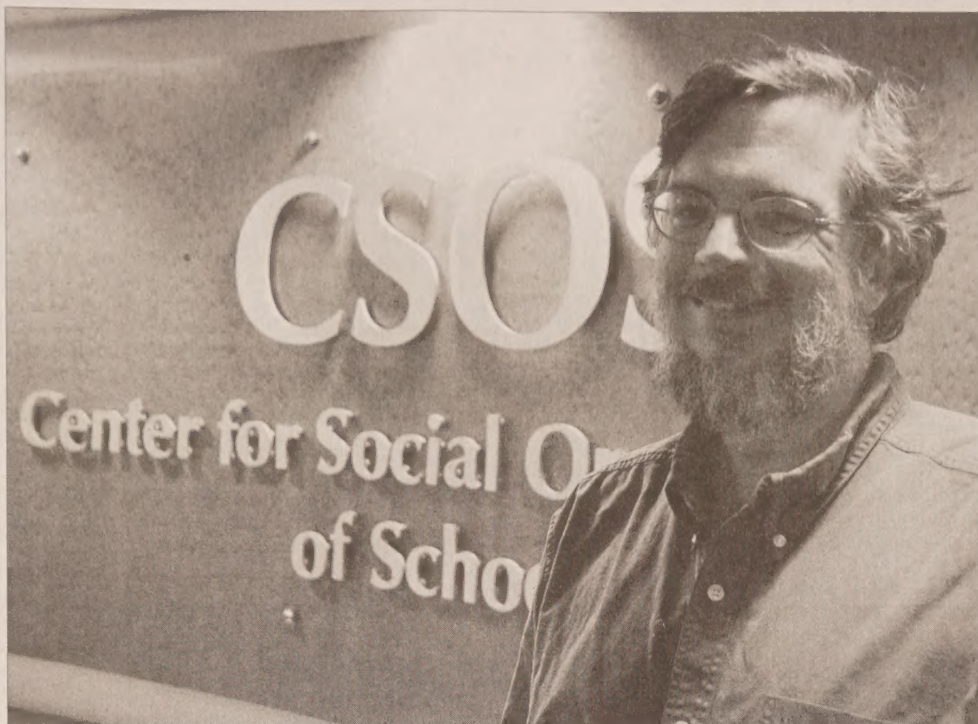
Critics of the report say the simple comparison of freshman enrollment with senior enrollment fails to take into account various other factors including students who transfer out, repeat a grade or are expelled.

Bob Balfanz, author of the report, argues that these occurrences do not account for the extraordinarily high number of students not reaching 12th grade.

"This can introduce some bias," Balfanz said, "but not enough to fundamentally alter the proposition that a high school in which there are routinely 60 or fewer seniors for every 100 freshmen who started is a high school with a high probability of low graduation and high dropout rates."

"I don't think it will skew a lot of the results," said Mary Maushard, communications director for CSOS.

"Transferring out is a natural process in schools but students don't leave in huge numbers. Where then do the vast majority



LAURA BITNER/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Bob Balfanz of the CSOS offered the controversial report, which labeled 1,700 American high schools "dropout factories."

of the kids go?"

The report estimates that transfer students can only account for one to two percent of the missing students.

Balfanz added that statistics collected by state and local governments are unreliable. Calculations are inconsistent from state to state and even between neighboring districts.

The phrase "dropout factory" has also caused controversy. Critics have argued that the phrase implies that teachers, school administrators or the students in schools with low retention rates, low graduation

rates and high dropout rates are the cause of the problem. "Nothing could be further from the truth," Balfanz said. "The teachers, administrators and students in these schools are often going to heroic lengths to succeed despite long odds."

Balfanz, instead, blamed the intended and unintended consequences of policies implemented by city, state and federal governments, which create schools that are under-resourced, over-challenged and non-supported.

"By no means was this report intended to place the blame on school administrators and teachers," Maushard said. "The goal of the study was to simply highlight a growing problem the country faces."

The report labeled five of Baltimore City's 28 high

schools as "dropout factories". A "dropout factory" is a school in which every year, a significant number of under-prepared and disengaged students enter the ninth grade and struggle to succeed.

"These students become further disengaged, stop attending on a regular basis, fail two or more courses, do not earn promotion to the 10th grade, try again the next year, do no better, likely transfer to another regular school or alternative school, fail to succeed again, and having become over-aged and under-credited and worn down through years of struggle, drop out of school," Balfanz said.

"The process is repetitive, mechanical, and continuous — hence, factory-like."

High schools and vocational schools earn the "dropout factory" label when they graduate less than 60 percent of their freshman class.

While previous studies simply examined the rate of dropout or the rate of graduation, Balfanz's looks at the retention rate, comparing the number of seniors in a high school to the number of freshmen three-years prior.

The study tracked students for three years — 2004, 2005 and 2006 — in order to ensure that low retention rates were

not due to local events, such as natural disasters or economic woes.

According to Balfanz, the retention rate, or "Promoting Power," reveals the extent to which students in a high school succeed in making it from 9th to 12th grade.

The recent report released by the CSOS is an update of a 2004 report called "Locating the Dropout Crisis." This report did not include a list of schools but rather analyzed regional and socioeconomic trends across the United States.

The researchers decided to release the list of schools after the Associated Press approached them for an article about high school dropouts, according to Maushard.

"I will say that this report is like the check engine light on the car," she said. "When the check engine light comes on you pay attention to it. The overall intent was the create awareness," he said.

Urban areas and impoverished rural areas had the highest concentration of dropout factory schools. Dropout schools tend to have large minority populations.

While Utah has no dropout school, nearly half the schools in Florida and South Carolina are classified as dropout factories.

Hopkins faculty, students react to mideast conflict

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

The general public reaction has been that the conference achieved what it set out to do, although its initial goal may have been small scale to begin with.

"It was successful within the modest limits that were set for it — it didn't achieve much, but it didn't set out to achieve much," David said. "It jump-started a process that had been moribund, and it's a real test of whether that process takes off as there are still major problems with terrorism, the future of Jerusalem and other major problems that have not been addressed."

President of Coalition of Hopkins Advocates for Israel Jordan Libowitz agreed. "They weren't trying to get any peace accord out of it. It was to start peace talks and it certainly did that. It also brought some countries to the table that had never been there before, like Saudi Arabia and Syria. This conference, more than anything, was about opening doors," he said.

But sophomore Ben Silverstein disagrees. "Palestine wasn't really represented there (Abbas was there, but the Hamas was not invited) so the democratic government of Palestine was not even present," he said.

Silverstein, who is Jewish, pointed out, "I was raised hearing the Israeli side, but I don't understand how anyone can hear their [the Palestinian] side and not feel sympathetic just because there is a small contingent that have become suicide bombers."

He added, "I would say that Palestinians are among the most oppressed people in the world right now, and because of

the politics of terrorism, they're not recognized as oppressed because of the terrorism tactics used."

David added that the significance of the Annapolis conference lies in the fact that there has not been a meeting of this kind the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference. "Because [the Annapolis peace conference] is the only game in town, if you care about the settlement in the Middle East, there's nothing that's been going on until this," he added.

Lindsay also discussed a United Nations report on "softer, cultural things, not harder things like nuclear weapons." The cultural situation in the Middle East, such as in global commerce and gender issues, may pose a problem since Americans hope that ending the state of war between Palestinians and Israelis would generally result in a democratic state, which would in turn involve more votes, protect minority rights and protect the rights of women. The disparity between the western view of democracy and the deep religious roots that are entrenched in the Middle East may pose cultural problems for the peace talk, he said.

Based on what was said in the conference, mixed views remain about the future of the peace talks. "We see leaderships of both sides that are very weak and very fragile and it's not clear what they can bring for their people and even if they do come to an agreement, there's a lot to be pessimistic and modest about," David said.

David believed that Israel's move to build settlements in the West Bank and Gaza instead

New politicians sign on for healthcare forums

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

"Candidates have said yes, but then you still have to fight to get on their schedule," he said. "It's a political season unlike any other political season and campaigns are freaking out."

According to Field, recent plans to tape the discussion with Clinton will need to be rescheduled. Brody would have flown out to film in Iowa, where the senator was campaigning.

"The contact in her office said 'I already have 100 events lined up.' You wouldn't think there were 100 places to go in Iowa," Field joked. With several presidential candidates still not signed on for the forums, coordinators are "going back to other candidates and prodding to get a response," Field said.

Discussions were originally to be held only with the top-polling candidates for president before invitations to participate were extended to all of them.

Now the scope of the forum has expanded further, and will include "some national figures who are not candidates," Brody said.

Hopkins alumnus and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg filmed a discussion moderated by TV newscaster Judy Woodruff. Invitations have been extended to California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich.

The forum with Gravel was taped in the studios of Retirement Living Television (RLTV), located at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County campus.

"He had some interesting things to say about health care. He was very candid," Field said. "He freely admits he is a minor candidate."

When asked by forum moderator and National Public Radio personality Diane Rehm whether his proposed universal healthcare voucher plan would ever be passed by Congress, he said, "Oh none, zero, it's not going to happen," Field said.

The discussion with Romney covered the healthcare system he signed into law in 2006 as governor of Massachusetts, which fines residents who have not purchased health care.

Preparation for each discussion involved examining "the record of each candidate to formulate questions that would bring out their central ideas," Field said.

"We also always hope to find something unique."

With Gravel, this meant discussing his decision to declare bankruptcy in 2004 because of debt from medical bills.

"It's not uncommon, and it's a great angle for us to talk about these issues," Field said.

Field hopes that the all the forums involving presidential candidates will have been recorded and broadcast by Feb. 5.

By that date, Field said most feel that "There will have been enough key states voting that when the night is over we will know who the Democratic and Republican nominees are."

Maryland holds its primary on Feb. 12. New Hampshire has the first primary in the nation on Jan. 8, five days after the Iowa caucus.

Organizers hope the forums will be viewed besides during airings on Columbia-based RLTV, which broadcasts in 30 million homes.

"As I understand it, there is an agreement with ION network, which is in 90 million homes," Field said. However, the forums will not expand beyond cable television.

"They are going to stay on cable because of the FCC and issues with equal time. We have invited all candidates to participate, but on cable we aren't faced with regulation," Field said.

Elliot Jacobson, vice president of programming and development for RLTV, could not be reached for comment.



COURTESY OF HTTP://FORTHARDKNOX.COM
Mitt Romney has already recorded a session with President Brody discussing pertinent healthcare issues.

StuCo plans to announce grad. speaker by end of next week

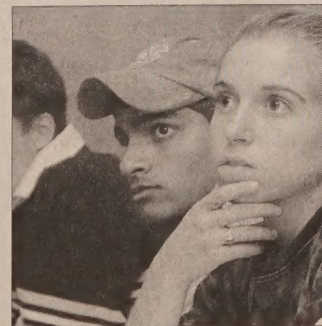
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if we are able to get them, then we will be happy," Singh said. "I think if we are able to work out everything, and all goes as planned, he will be a great speaker."

Unlike nearly all of its peer institutions, Hopkins does not pay its commencement speakers, which members of the council said severely limits the candidate pool.

"All I can say is in the past four years, people haven't been happy with" the choice of commencement speakers, said Senior Class Secretary Kristina Das. "This year we wanted to get a great speaker, one our classmates wanted."

She said she "certainly would

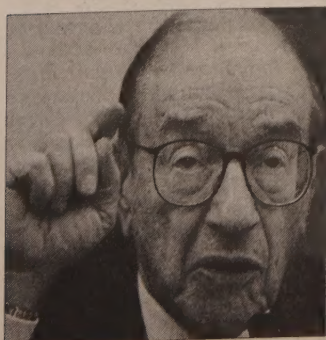


CONOR KEVITT/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
Members of StuCo are responsible for the selection of graduation speakers.

be happy with any" of the potential candidates and was "sure that [other] people will be satisfied with whomever we get, but you can't appease everyone."

The junior class has already begun the search for 2009's commencement speaker. "We're starting early this year; we're just getting organized," said president of the junior class, Prasanna Chandrasekhar.

Recent commencement speakers have included Baltimore Ravens Coach Brian Billick, National Institutes of Health Director Elias Zerhouni and former Vice President and recent Nobel Peace Prize recipient Al Gore.



COURTESY OF HTTP://NOWORLDSYSTEM.COM
Alan Greenspan was an option.

Hopkins has no plans to consider divestment from war-torn Sudan

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1
a bad idea for other reasons," he said.

When conflict first began in Sudan, certain companies were identified as doing business in region. At that time, the University reviewed its investments in order to withhold from these companies on the basis of financial interest only.

At no point has Hopkins ever made an official University policy that would ensure investments — via mutual funds or other means — would not go to companies that do business in Sudan based on social responsibility.

"We just haven't asked and answered that question," said Dennis O'Shea, director of communications and public affairs for the University.

In the 1990s, the University did make it an official policy that none of its investments would go to tobacco companies, but it has made no such effort regarding Sudan.

"With a university of that size, there will be links to those investments [in Sudan]. There are probably no direct holdings, but there could be indirect ones through mutual funds," said Max Croes, advocacy associate with the Sudan Divestment Task Force (SDTF), a project of the Genocide Intervention Network.

"It's very ethically reprehensible to continue," said Aaron Martel, director of the JHU Students Taking Action Now: Darfur (STAND) divestment campaign.

The campaign is one of many national efforts focusing on targeted divestment, also known as selective divestment.

Martel hopes the campaign will force the University to divest from companies that the SDTF views as having financial ties to the region. Hopkins could then re-invest the money in more acceptable sources while still yielding reasonable returns.

"We're not making any extreme fringe demands," he said.

Still, the University will not take a position on either side. They have neither systematically

reviewed their investments, nor made the investments available for public scrutiny.

"None of our managers is invested in companies in Sudan, whether in our name or in a fund's name," Chief Investment Officer Kathryn Crecelius wrote in an e-mail.

According to Crecelius, the investment office essentially acts as "managers of managers." A large portion of the University's holdings are in collective investments, such as mutual funds. The nature of these investments makes it more complicated to trace exactly where the funds are going.

Crecelius said that the University hires outside managers who buy securities in either the name of the University or in the name of their fund. Since the managers do not find "sustainable businesses" in Sudan, they have no desire to directly invest in these businesses.

Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration James McGill said that he believes that the human rights issues in Sudan "will be dealt with most effectively via economic and diplomatic pressures instituted by our government and other governments."

The board of trustees, which makes the final decisions when it comes to University finances, refused to comment.

In the years since the genocide began, over 50 universities have divested, including some of the most prestigious in the country.

Harvard University previously held direct investments in PetroChina, a Chinese oil company under the China National Petroleum Corporation that was notorious for its human rights violations in the region, including direct contributions to military spending that funded the genocide. Students protested when they discovered the investment, which eventually led the University to total withdrawal from companies doing business in Sudan.

In an official statement by the Harvard Corporation Committee on Shareholder Responsibility,

the university's Advisory Corporation Committee on Shareholder Responsibility said that Harvard, "as an academic rather than a political institution, must take great care to avoid leveraging its endowment or prestige in ways that could embroil the institution in political and social controversies not directly related to its academic pursuits, and thus compromise the core values and independence of the academic enterprise."

The SDTF maintains a list of companies that do business in Sudan, which it updates yearly. The companies listed vary in the degree of severity of their offenses — some are indirectly linked to atrocities and some, like PetroChina, are directly fueling the fighting.

"Control over Sudan's considerable oil reserves is a major issue and has been for a long time," history professor Sara Berry said.

Sudan has been embroiled in civil war since its independence from British and Egyptian power in 1956, and economic struggle has always been part of the conflict. The issue of oil control overshadowed the two separate civil wars that plagued Sudan after reserves were discovered in the 1970s.

Genocide in Darfur is rooted in conflict that began five years ago between rebel groups based in the region and the regime in Khartoum, Sudan's capital city. The ruling majority population is Arab-African, while the people in Darfur are not.

Government-sponsored militias called the Janjaweed have decimated entire villages of Darfur, but have had virtually no impact on the rebel groups. Not even a 2005 peace agreement could bring a definitive end to the conflict.

Berry said that while the University would be making a significant symbolic gesture by divesting, the economic impact would be "insignificant," due to the enormity of Chinese contracts in the region.

Martel agreed that China's impact in the region is negative and highly imposing, because its policies are not human rights-friendly. China has been giving

totalitarian regimes a "blank check," Martel said, in cooperating with their demands to make the most profit possible.

An economics professor, who preferred to be quoted anonymously, agreed that a single university divestment would not have much effect on the country economically because of China's presence in the region.

"The whole world would have to divest and refuse to buy. Otherwise it's just one little guy selling one little share," he said.

Furthermore, the professor said that in some cases a single organization divesting could have the adverse effect of helping the companies it wanted to hurt in the first place. These company owners could suddenly get shares back that were just sold without having to pay anything and then being able to reap all the profits.

"In that case, you're actually just doing them a favor," the professor said.

He argued that the biggest reason for divesting in the first place is politicizing the issue, not making an economic impact. He cited the student protests and rallies held by students during the 1980s to get Hopkins to divest from the then-apartheid regime in South Africa. Due to great student involvement, the University finally did divest.

According to the professor, however, even if much of the world divested of Sudan, Chinese money would keep the companies and the government there



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In the Kasab camp in North Darfur women line up for food at a World Food Programme distribution.

going.

"Inter-country competition gravely adds to the problem, especially since China is active in the region and no longer in Maoist isolation," he said.

The professor suggested that a more effective way of stopping a company from being involved in the region is to sue them for human rights-related issues, since court cases restrict companies from operating.

However, the professor said that there are still benefits to universities divesting. The gesture is symbolic and can help to change public opinion.

"If Hopkins divests, then people might panic about their shares and sell," he said. "Divestment is a good way to send a message and get the ball rolling."

Conflict in the region is further complicated by Sudan's enormous oil reserves. According to Martel, major oil companies that operate in Sudan have direct contracts with the Khartoum regime.

Oil companies finance military spending in exchange for being able to drill for petroleum.

"Around the time that oil contracts are made, soldiers' salaries and military spending of any sort double," Martel said.

"Just as in other parts of Africa blood diamonds fund atrocities, blood oil funds the devastation in Darfur," Martel said.

Last night, JHU STAND hosted Darfur Fast to collect money that will be used to protect the region's civilians and to raise awareness of the current human rights atrocities being committed against them.

STAND has been organizing campus events in the past few years and has branched out to presenting genocide education in local Baltimore schools since the Darfur crisis began. STAND Events and Regional Conference Coordinator Adriane Alicea described the ultimate goal of the organization as one of "trying to stop genocide around the world."

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STRUEVER BROS. ECCLES & ROUSE
Transforming America's Cities

Two columnists take a look at the tricky task of holiday shopping

A smart, fashion-savvy gift is the perfect way to say “thanks” to your family and yourself

As the holidays approach, students tend to focus more on the deadly exams staring us down. Because of this, we often forget to thank those closest to us for their help and support. Let's not forget, it's the season to be jolly and also to give and receive. What better way to say thank you than with the thoughtful gift of an article of clothing?

Before hitting the malls, think deeply about the personality of each family member and sneak a look into their wardrobes. The last thing you want to do is buy your preppy brother a grunge tee that he'll instantly throw in the back of the closet. Spend time scoping out their likes and dislikes, paying careful attention to the clothing they wear most often around the house. The perfect clothing gift is one that's worn so often that it eventually resembles a dishrag.

This season, for dad, you look into getting him a nice pair of shoes. Chances are that he's a bit old-fashioned or just too lazy to go shopping for himself. Look at a pair of loafers for when he feels like taking casual Friday seriously. If he's more of a businessman, invest in a pair of brogues. The delicate design and style will have him ogling his new shoes and handing you money like it was growing in his pockets. If dear old dad is retired, sleepy and comfortable with not leaving the house for days, buy him a nice pair of slippers made of soft fabrics and trimmed in leather. He'll fall right asleep on the couch, leaving you to sneak out with the car keys.

Give grandma and grandpa a gift they can enjoy together. There's no reason to invest in edgy outerwear, shoes or shirts, unless your grandfather is Hugh Hefner. At their age, your grandparents know just what they want and how they want it; they probably don't like the idea of change either. Buy them a pair of matching robes for

in and around the house. Your grandparents spend as much time in their robes as you do in the library, so it's a smart decision. Otherwise, look into some luxury sleepwear. They'll love the feel of silk just as much as you do.

As for your siblings, the range of items is massive. Assuming that you and your siblings are close in age, it should be obvious what styles they prefer and what styles they absolutely despise.

Once you know what stores they shop at, buying them the perfect gift should be a breeze. For very young siblings, the best gift is the simplest gift. For an infant sister, consider a pair of colorful and vibrant rain boots. Even if she doesn't wear them, at least it'll become something she can stare at and giggle. As for the younger brother, I suggest something that resembles one of your own garments. He probably looks up to you like a god or goddess so finding him a scarf that matches your own will make him go crazy with joy. The same, of course, goes for the little sister.

Now comes the hard part: mom. They're wonderful; they'll make you your favorite dinner, take care of you when you're sick and tuck you in at night, even at 20 years old. Finding them the perfect piece of clothing might be the hardest thing since that

second deadly midterm in orgo. Considering the fact that they are middle-aged women, there is a good chance that they know more about fashion than you do.

My suggestion would be to think about getting mom a gift

For girlfriends and boyfriends, hold off on the whipped cream and leather until the birthdays

So you're agonizing over what to give as presents this holiday season. Fear no more. While I'm not here to tell you what to get your family (you've had two decades to work that out), I

buy him lotion. Try to stay away from overly sappy CDs. Consider an upgrade for his Xbox headset or PS2 controllers, something platonic but thoughtful. For your recently acquired girlfriend, consider low-key jewelry: simple chain-and-charm necklaces or beaded bracelets. Contemplate taking her out to dinner, but make it special. Or cook it yourself! If she likes frats, clubs or hoo-kah bars, maybe some black-light nailpolish or jewelry is in order.

The strangest person to shop for is your consistent hook-up. You're not dating, but you feel as though you ought to get them something besides condoms this week. Go for more inconspicuous food — no maple syrup.

— that is, you “hang out” at least weekly, for more than the last three weeks. Otherwise, when you give the girl you hooked up with two weeks ago an economy-size box of Twisted Pleasure condoms and a mix of Death Cab for Cutie and Snow Patrol, she'll run screaming.

Another awkward gift exchange can be with your significant other's roommate. If you've been dating long enough or seriously, you've become at least pseudo-friends with this individual. You may be harboring guilt about constant sexiling. Earplugs are unnecessary and uncouth; however, high-quality hot chocolate is in good taste. A normal, clean movie would also be a nice gesture.

For the male best friend of your boyfriend, err on the side of macho but not sexual. This means an NFL pennant but not a jersey. A CD could work as long as it's Dethklok and not Lesbian (yes, it's a metal band).

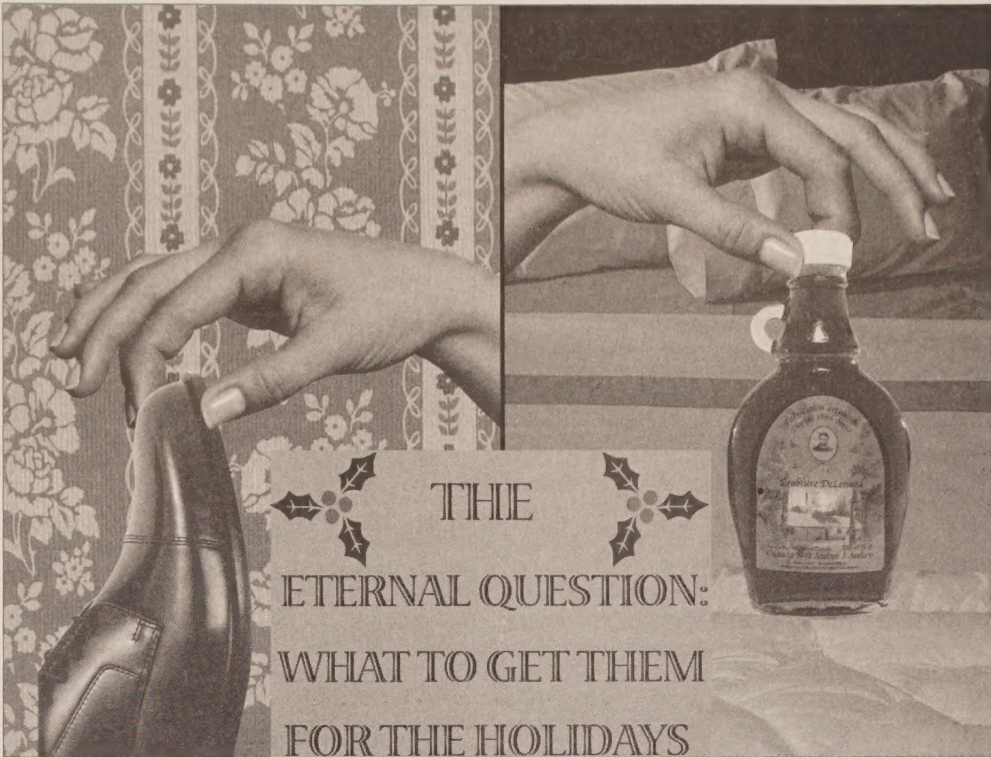
When buying for the female best friend of your girlfriend, aim for feminine without being sexual. Try Backstreet Boys, not Shakira, a book about Barbie, not bras, or a My Little Pony, not a My Little Vibrating Rabbit.

For the female best friend of your boyfriend, be careful not to come off as territorial. If she has a sense of humor, try a knitting kit. If she doesn't, go for an understated set of soaps.

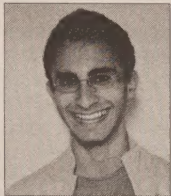
Don't buy whips and chains for a significant other, even if that's what they're into — that's not really the spirit of these holidays. Buy that on a birthday and request they use it in their birthday suit. Furthermore, do not “write” your girlfriend a song in which you change the lyrics of a song she's

not likely to know.

Grace Gwendolyn Henry is a philosophy major who would like a diorama of Plato's ideal city. She can be reached grace.henry@jhnews-letter.com.



MATT HANSEN/GRAPHICS EDITOR



Siavash Raigani
Hop Couture

Siavash Raigani is a fashion designer and the founder of Hop Couture. He is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University and has worked for several fashion brands. He is currently working on his collection for the upcoming season.

card. Either that, or plainly ask her what she wants; she'll still love you one way or the other, that's why they're mothers.

Of course, now that you've taken care of the family's gifts, the only person left is you. It should be easy to indulge a little this holiday; after all, you've worked hard all semester (hopefully) and you need to relax. There's no reason you can't buy that sweater you've always wanted, or for girls, go a bit crazy and buy six pairs of shoes.

The holiday season should be the best time of the year, so spend some of your hard-earned money on your family, because the best gift is seeing smiles on your loved ones' faces when they open their presents.

Siavash Raigani can be reached at siavash.raigani@jhnewsletter.com.



Grace Gwendolyn Henry
That's What She Said

Grace Gwendolyn Henry is a philosophy major who would like a diorama of Plato's ideal city. She can be reached grace.henry@jhnews-letter.com.

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The big question: Is Islam sexually stifling or feminist?

Obtaining condoms should be a simple errand, but if you start thinking about it too much, it can become a treacherous endeavor fraught with peril. Paranoid scenarios start running through your mind: Your hitherto out-of-the-loop ex might catch you in line with a packet of Trojans, the cashier will you give you a horrifying little smile as he hands you change or your fundamentalist RA will have poked a hole in all the free condoms she distributes.

If your paranoia barometer is near its breaking point, take a moment to thank your maker you don't live in an Islamic theocracy. In Iran, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and other states that enforce *sharia* (Islamic law), a condom found with (or on) an unmarried person is not just embarrassing but can be grounds for corporal punishment.

But junior Jasmine Ainetchian knows no fear. In a visit to Iran in the summer of 2005, Jasmine tried to buy condoms in Tehran in a small sex-political experiment.

“I put a ring on my wedding finger just in case I got caught,” she told me.

A master of disguise, Jasmine walked out of the store with a box of illicit contraceptives.

It's difficult to find a sufficiently depressing adjective to describe Iranian sex laws. Premarital sex can be a capital crime. Iranian law enforces a *haddith*, or oral tradition, that orders 100 lashes for the crime, certainly enough to kill some people. There's no ambiguity in case of adultery: They throw rocks at you until you die. Luckily, the law is not always enforced to its fullest extent. Premarital couplers are often fined, and punishment is sometimes sidestepped altogether by setting up a *sigheh*, or temporary marriage.

So for unmarried Iranians, the usual routes to getting some ass

are blocked. Pulling over to the side of the road and getting frisky is a distinct no-no. Even holding hands in public with a member of the opposite sex will get you attention from the police. Intriguingly, a same-sex couple holding hands with one another will probably be read as just friends, which is just as well because being gay in Iran will also get you killed with rocks.

What's astonishing is how, despite the sexually miserable legal system, the Iranians themselves can be incredibly liberal and un-repressed. There is a thriving underground sex culture, including a gay scene and gay rights movement.

Another obstacle to getting laid is Iran's strict legal code concerning fashion. Muslim women must cover their heads and bodies. The Qur'an says that “women ... should guard their modesty ... They should not display their beauty ... they should draw veils over their bosoms” (24:31).

Many young Iranian women manage to express themselves sexually while working around the constraints. They wear their head scarves far back on the head, revealing the face. Instead of showing skin, they wear bright, gaudy colors and high-ankled pants.

Dressing provocatively is bound to provoke more attention than you want, especially from the “fashion police” who reprimand and sometimes arrest people in immodest clothing.

So is a progressive, egalitarian, feminist culture possible under Islam? The growing Islamic feminist movement believes it is.

Senior Maryam Jelvani feels

that Islam is fully compatible with feminism and egalitarianism. The problem is not the religion itself, she told me, but the way it is interpreted by governments and societies in the Middle East.

For example, Jelvani says that the veil — which she proudly wears — is not oppressive but pro-woman. For her it means that “God ... is telling men not to think of women only in terms of their physical beauty or their sexual attractiveness. By making the physical irrelevant, the focus shifts to the spiritual and intellectual aspects of the person.”

Many scholars agree with Jelvani: “One would seek in vain for the slightest trace of misogyny in the whole of the Quran. ... [A true] Islamic civilization is essentially feminist,” Ab-

delwahab Bouhdiba wrote in his 1975 sociological study, *Sexuality in Islam*.

Not everyone agrees. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, an apostate from Islam who received international attention for calling Islam “the new fascism,” wrote in a London newspaper earlier this year that “violence is inherent in Islam — it's a destructive, nihilistic cult of death.” Hirsi Ali received international attention as the screenwriter of *Submission*, a 10-minute film about the abuse of women in Islam.

Jelvani would agree that most Muslim countries mistreat women, but strongly believes the religion itself is feminist, even if the actions of its followers do not reflect this. “Do a lot of Muslim countries treat women terribly? Yes. But to attribute that to Islam shows an ignorance of history.”

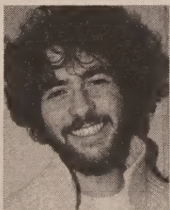
Misogyny and political oppression of women is a Middle Eastern tradition that predates Islam, Jelvani says. “A lot of these cultures have always mistreated and demeaned women.”

Jelvani cites misogyny as the original motivator for the spread of Islam. “Part of the reason Muslims believe Islam was revealed in Arabia was because the culture was so corrupt. The people were so ignorant that they needed a prophet to guide them, to bring them out of the *jaheliya*, or darkness.”

The prophet was, at least compared to these benighted Arabs, a feminist. “When the prophet Muhammad began preaching Islam, he was preaching women's rights and their value.” By contrast, 7th-century Arabs were so male-centered they were practicing female infanticide, Jelvani explains. “Islam gave women rights to property, to vote, to be valued as much as men, not to be judged on the basis of their femininity but on the basis of their virtues. This was all very elevating for women.”

Islam was not always a prudish faith. From the 9th century to the 16th, sexual taboos in Islam were few. One of the world's earliest and best sex manuals, a 15th-century classic called *The Perfumed Garden*, was written by an Islamic scholar, Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Nafzawi. The book contains no images, because Islam forbids, for fear of idolatry, all depictions of humans. The manual's section entitled “The Sundry Names Given to the Sexual Parts of Man” uses numerous expressions to describe the penis — including “the discoverer,” “the trickster” and “the liberator.” The book documents the various kinds of vaginas, including “the hedgehog,” “the hot one,” “the humpbacked” and “the one with a long nose.”

E-mail: raffi@jhnewsletter.com



Raffi Krut-Landau
Blue Balls

Checking out the Army-Navy game in downtown B-more

M&T Stadium was especially crowded last Saturday morning. Men and women in flashy Army and Navy uniforms filled the streets, blending with an assortment of men, women and children who all came out to support the troops.

This was the 108th annual Army-Navy game and the fourth time the two military academies played each other in Baltimore. Amid the fanfare, the colorful uniforms, the enthusiastic crowds and music from the military band, the football game was a great opportunity to boost the declining morale of the troops.

From the surface, the atmosphere of the game was light-hearted and uplifting. There was a fantastic display of over 8,000 midshipmen from the Naval Academy and cadets from West Point. The troops marched up the street towards the M&T Bank Stadium, cheering, singing and waving at the spectators. Somehow, none seemed to realize there is still a war happening on the other side of the globe. Indeed, the football game diluted the cruel reality of the ongoing war.

Behind the imposing sounds of trumpets and loud cheers, another type of atmosphere seemed to be on some people's minds. While watching the Navy parade, I overheard a group in quiet discussion about their absent family members. After a quick scan of the crowd, it was easy to spot some single moms,

with a few kids at their side. They had anxious looks on their faces, perhaps expecting to see their absent husbands among the parading troops passing by.

While the troops paraded proudly through the streets of Baltimore, I strolled around Inner Harbor and found some things that were strangely familiar. Wildly painted Army Hummers sat on almost every corner. Speakers emitted loud music, attracting some curious pedestrians.

Nearby Army representatives and recruiting agents showed off their equipment and high-tech gadgets. When I asked an Army representative about the purpose of these displays, he explained that “this is not recruitment,” but rather “community involvement activities.”

On the other side of the harbor, the Navy was also trying its best to “involve the community.” There, on the water of the harbor, was another imposing sight, a warship known as the “HSV Swift,” the fastest ship in the entire fleet.

On the opposite side, the troops paraded grandly. In the midst of uplifting music and loud cheers of support, I was reminded of my high school graduation ceremony, and the song “Pomp and Circumstance,” which spoke of a feeling of triumph, excitement and uncertainty about the future. That day, the newly-trained mids and cadets were experiencing their pomp and circumstance.

James Zhe is a freshman International Studies and economics major from Vancouver.

THE JOHNS HOPKINS NEWS-LETTER

PUBLISHED SINCE 1896 BY THE STUDENTS OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

EDITORIAL

Commit to divestment

While the international community continues to increase its pressure on the Sudanese government to end the genocide in Darfur, institutions across the United States, both public and private, are looking closely at what they can do to help end the conflict.

One of the easiest and most effective strategies to address the issue of the genocide in Sudan is divestment — restricting or withholding investments from companies that do business with the Sudanese government. Divestment can affect Sudanese policies by targeting private companies that work with the Sudanese government. When our nation's institutions do business with companies that work with the Sudanese government, that money indirectly goes toward the Janjaweed militia, which is committing genocide in southern Sudan.

Businesses are profit-driven institutions. By isolating these businesses and thus rendering it unprofitable to do business with Sudan, divestment works to isolate the current regime.

In recent years, a number of high-profile private universities — universities we often call our “peers” — have taken the lead on this by thoroughly reviewing their investment profiles and publicly divesting from Sudan. Harvard, Stanford, Yale, Brown and Dartmouth, along with 50 other universities, have all divested.

Unfortunately, Hopkins has not publicly divested and refuses even to consider it. By conservative estimates, more than a quarter of a million people have been killed in Darfur. And yet the administration does not consider it a moral imperative to publicly and fully divest from Sudan as a matter of University policies.

We find this disturbing on a number of levels, not least of which is ethical. Does the University not consider it an overriding ethical responsibility to review its investments — thoroughly and transparently — to ensure that they do not in some way contribute to the Sudanese government? We do, and we're willing to bet most students do too.

Divestment is more than just a theory. It has a history of success, such as when institutions around the successfully isolated the South African government in the 1980s to end apartheid. Divestment can work again. This is not a mechanism that will hurt the Sudanese people. The money that would be divested is going to the Sudanese government, which is at war with its own people.

University officials have told the *News-Letter* that Hopkins does not have investments in Sudan. The University's chief investment officer, Katryn Crecelius, has said, “None of our managers is invested in companies in Sudan, whether in our name or in the fund's name.” But, where is the proof to back up this claim?

And yet University officials are careful to say that they have not “made sure” that none of their investments go to Sudan. They should make sure. Now.

The University refuses to release any information about where its money is going.

This opacity of the administration's management of the Hopkins endowment is a persistent problem. The Sustainability Institute has already given Hopkins an F on endowment transparency. The Sudan Divestment Task Force has said that it's more than likely that a university of Hopkins's size has indirect links to investments in companies that do business with the Sudanese government, possibly through mutual funds. Still, the University refuses to even conduct a review of its investments. Instead, the administration has openly admitted that it has not even asked the question regarding a policy of divestment.

With this information, how can we just blindly trust the statements of officials on a matter of such moral urgency?

It is irresponsible, and indeed morally reprehensible, for the University to claim that none of its investments go to Sudan without either conducting a comprehensive review of its investments or making the results of such a review available for public inspection. The universities that have taken a lead on divestment have conducted thorough and transparent reviews of their respective investment profiles, identified the violating investments and eliminated them. Hopkins can and should do the same.

And, if the University has indeed conducted some sort of review, or is somehow sure that none of its investments indirectly end up in Sudan, why can't it make that information available to the public?

We urge the University to make all the relevant information about its investment profile available for public inspection immediately. We also call on the board of trustees to vote as soon as possible for a comprehensive review of the University's investments, in order to ensure that none of them go to companies that do business in Sudan. This will require leadership, so we call on Board of Trustees President Pamela Flaherty to push for such a review.

It would also be prudent for the Student Council, as representatives of the student body, to take on Sudan divestment as one of its most pressing ethical causes and pressure the University — by building a coalition of student organizations and passing firmly worded resolutions — to review its investments thoroughly and transparently and, ultimately, divest from Sudan. This is an area in which the Council can take up an urgent ethical challenge and lobby the University on the students' behalf. It will take more than the pleas of this page to compel the University to action on this paradigmatic moral imperative of our generation.

More than a quarter of a million have died, still more are dying every day, and the University's money could be helping that happen. Action is the only answer and it must happen quickly. We urge the University to review its investments now, make that review transparent and, ultimately, divest from Sudan. If it does not, its woeful complacency will prove an egregious moral failing — one that will haunt us all for years.

Insuring America's future

More prominent political figures have joined President William Brody's televised forums on health care. With so many uninsured Americans in this country it is encouraging that Hopkins is taking the lead in trying to develop a national political dialogue about health care in the United States. It is an important issue for Hopkins, which is at the forefront of the medical and public health fields.

The fact that a debate including so many leading political figures is taking place is an encouraging sign. Though there are heated debates about implementation, Democrat, Republican and Independent leaders agree that the American healthcare industry needs significant reform.

Such voices are represented at Brody's forums, as Sen. Joe Biden (D-Del.), Mayor Michael Bloomberg (I-N.Y.), Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.), former Sen. Mike Gravel (D-Alaska), former Gov. Mike Huckabee (R-Ark.) and former Gov. Mitt Romney (R-Mass.) have all either already participated or agreed to do so. The list is showing signs of growing.

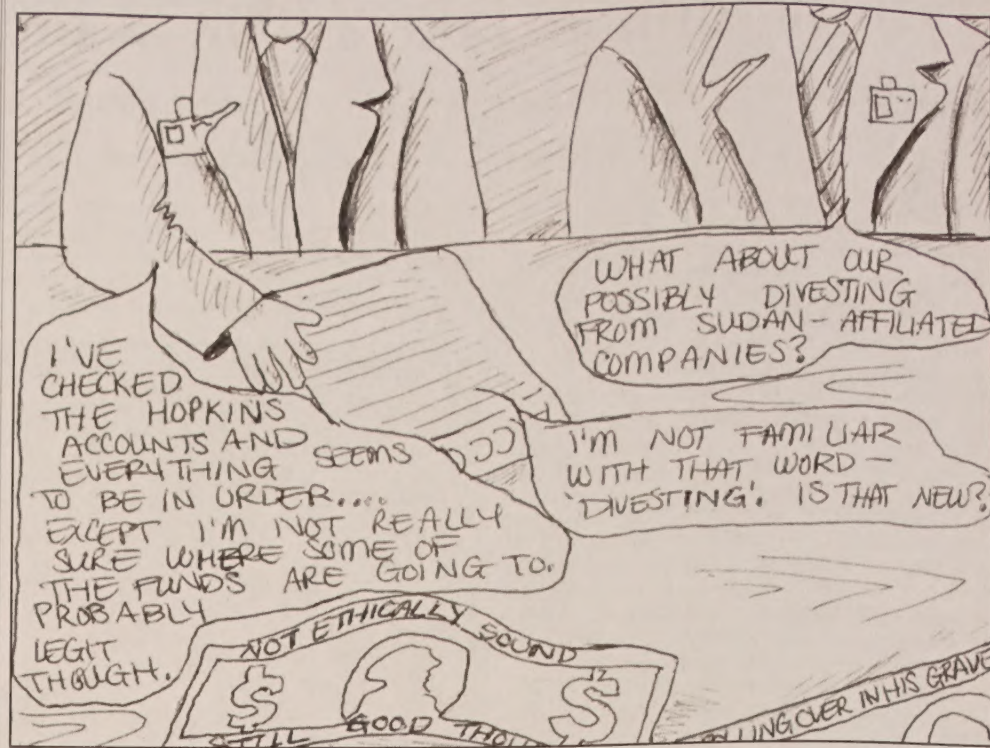
We hope more political leaders agree to join the forums. This is especially important for presidential candidates and Congress-

sional leaders. They will be at the center of the national debate when there is national healthcare reform. Presidential candidates should make it easier for all Americans to get an in-depth and intimate review of a policy that will drastically effect their lives. Hopkins should invite Congressional leaders into the debate too, since they will be writing the legislation and fighting the battle in Congress.

The fact that there is bipartisan agreement that health care is an issue is a significant sign. It may mean that the momentum is in favor of actual political action in the near future. Still it is discouraging that these forums on such a critical issue will be reaching so few Americans.

So far the forums have only been viewed on the Maryland-based Retirement Living Television (RLTV), which has only 30 million viewers, and YouTube.com, and there is an agreement with ION Television. Few people actually know what ION Television is. Understandably, because of the conflict with FCC rulings on equal time for politicians, the forums can not be held on network TV. Pursuing higher visibility would greatly benefit the forums and, in turn, America.

Natachi Chukumerijie



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Theater critics shouldn't be lazy journalists

To the Editor:

I'm writing in regard to Sarah Sabshon's review of Witness's recent one-acts showcase, which I found to be characterized by careless, insensitive comments.

“[Laura Gordon's] personality overwhelmed the character. Just a little too bouncy, a little too smiley and sometimes inappropriately sexualized, Gordon's acting made Marla's character a little less sympathetic — it was no wonder that her boyfriend cheated on her!” Yes, no wonder that sexualized women are cheated on. I've also heard that women who dress in mini-skirts are “asking for it.”

I don't think Ms. Sabshon intended this insult or the many

others peppered through the article. I do think they indicate a kind of lazy journalism, and I also think they're consistent with my experiences being reviewed by the *News-Letter*.

I've been at Hopkins for seven semesters; in that time I've been directly involved in 22 plays on campus, and reporters have talked to performers only twice. Both reviews benefited, I believe, from direct contact with the production.

But those two instances are so much the exception that I'm beginning to believe it is the *News-Letter's* policy for its reviewers to know little about the scripts of plays and nothing about the people involved in producing them. I do not pretend to be a journalist, but I would imagine that research is an important part of the process of reportage. Sitting in an audience is the most passive kind of research and does not in itself qualify a person to write a review. So, reviewers are hereby

invited to talk to us after our shows. I think you'll find we like to talk. We're theater kids.

Finally I'd like to point out that of the seven students on Witness's board, four are science or engineering majors. That diversity is consistent throughout Witness's population and, I believe, through the populations of all the student theater groups.

My point is that when Ms. Sabshon says, “it is always refreshing to see talented playwrights, actors and directors in a sea of engineers and premeds,” she would do well to notice that Witness is a mere tidal pool on the beach of that engineering sea, with the occasional crabby Writing Seminars student scuttling across its bottom. I believe we are all lucky to go to a university whose river of theatrical activity (it feeds the sea, you know) is so broad and deep.

— Mitch Frank
President, Witness Theater

LETTERS POLICY

The Johns Hopkins *News-Letter* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should not exceed 250 words. Letters must be delivered to the Gatehouse by Tuesday at 7 p.m. or e-mailed to News.Letter@jhu.edu for inclusion in that Thursday's issue. All letters received become property of the *News-Letter* and cannot be returned. The *News-Letter* reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and clarity. Letters must include the name, address and telephone number of the author. Only one author's name may be included. Groups, teams and other organizations may not submit letters, only individuals. The *News-Letter* reserves the right to limit the number of letters printed.

THE JOHNS HOPKINS NEWS-LETTER

PUBLISHED SINCE 1896 BY THE STUDENTS OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

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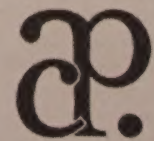
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OPINIONS

With the exception of editorials, the opinions expressed here are those of the contributors. They are not necessarily those of The Johns Hopkins News-Letter.

Romney and Obama will face off in November

By DYLAN DIGGS

It is very true that political punditry has the nasty tendency to delve into rampant speculation, often resulting in false and misleading assertions. The media can make or break candidates with a loud whisper.

Despite that, since the *News-Letter* will not be in print again until after the first primary states cast their votes, I would like to join the chorus of media speculation about the presidential presidencies. Take these predictions with a grain of salt. A lot changes in December—just ask Howard Dean. Still, I'll give it a shot.

Republicans Remain Indecisive

It's now looking like every week the Republicans have a new conservative hope to lead them to the promised land in November. Let me tell you this: Gov. Mike Huckabee (Ark.), famous for losing weight and hailing from Hope, Ark., is not the guy. The recent polls showing a surge for Huckabee may put the Romney campaign on the edge, but he's going to have to hold that through January.

Huckabee has invested a lot of time in Iowa, but given Gov. Mitt Romney's organizational strength in multiple states, Romney will be able to hold off the second man from Hope. Even if Huckabee were to win in Iowa (and I doubt it), he doesn't have the kind of strength to get the nomination. If that scenario were to play out and Romney's campaign were to fall apart, Rudy Giuliani (N.Y.) would make minced meat of Huckabee.

Romney will win the Republican nomination. One need only look at his strength in various states to recognize



LAUREN SCHWARTZMAN/GRAPHICS STAFF

his potential. Now, I hate polls, but they can be helpful on occasion to notice trends in public opinion.

Romney will grab hold of the Huckabee in Iowa on Jan. 3. Later that day he'll make his appeal to Republicans to explain his Mormon faith. He doesn't need to beat Huckabee at the former minister's own (and only) field, but he can try to frame the debate on his faith.

Following a Jan. 8 win in New Hampshire, where he has built a commanding lead, Romney will come in second to Giuliani in Michigan (Jan. 15) and Nevada

(Jan. 19), remaining in the top tier. The Massachusetts governor has developed a peculiar lead in South Carolina, and if he is able to score a win there along with his placement in Nevada, and a second place win in Florida, he will be well positioned for "Tsunami Tuesday" on Feb. 5, where Giuliani is expected to catch up.

Those social conservatives interested in Huckabee and Thompson will fall back and coalesce around Romney as a visible frontrunner. Given his momentum coming from January, Romney will secure the nomination, but not until later in the year, as Giuliani faces more

opposition and media speculation of a floundering campaign.

Hillary Will be a Bust

That's right, neither Sen. Hillary Clinton nor Giuliani will be their parties' nominees come this summer. What is Clinton's weakness? So much of America really doesn't like her (she's pretty much the most unlikable candidate since Nixon in 1969), and many Democrats feel the same way for different reasons. The benefit Clinton has had is that support for her opposition is divided between Sen. Barack Obama and Sen. John Edwards.

I have a feeling, considering some of the recent praise Edwards has offered to Obama about similarities in liberal positioning and vice-presidential considerations, that one of the two will be dropping out in January or early February.

Given that the Democratic primaries are proportional and that Edwards will come in third in Iowa, where all his resources are focused, I'm thinking Edwards will drop out after losing in South Carolina. This will come true unless the poll numbers from all those poor southerners and lowans who are saying that they'll vote for the black man or the woman actually end up marking their ballots for the one white man with a chance. I think it's that hope that is keeping Edwards in the race.

So that's my prediction. Romney and Obama will face off in the general election, but I'm not about to chance touching what will happen there.

Dylan Diggs is a senior political science major from Mount Airy, Md. He is also the News-Letter Opinions Editor.

The real goal of the Annapolis conference

By DAN MENAGED

The United States brought together representatives from the greatest powers in the Middle East last week in Annapolis, Md. The official premise of the conference was to create a framework for peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

I ran through the possibilities of why President Bush chose now to start peace negotiations, starting with the most logical: the assumption that now is a promising time for peace in the region. The West Bank is under the control of President Mahmoud Abbas, the supposedly moderate leader of Fatah. This seems to give the Israelis the partner for peace they have needed all along. Could the time have come for peace in the Middle East?

Is soon realized the implausibility of this having prompted the peace conference. In fact there are far more reasons why now is one of the worst times in recent history to hold such a peace conference. Putting aside the fallacy of considering Abbas a moderate, there is a plethora of reasons peace between Israel and the Palestinians is not realistic in the foreseeable future.

The first problem is the leadership on each side? On the Palestinian side, Abbas has virtually no power in the West Bank. Most intelligence assessments state that an Israeli withdrawal would lead to a Hamas takeover mirroring that in Gaza earlier this year. Their popularity wanes even in Ramallah, the cornerstone of the Fatah controlled West Bank, where Hamas won the recent mayoral election.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is also weak. This is a man who has an approval rating matched only by Bush. Olmert lacks the political power to make any major concessions to the Palestinians.

Even if Abbas and Olmert are considered the rightful representatives of their people, neither has shown the desire for a peace deal. The Fatah-controlled media continues to broadcast propaganda supporting suicide bombers as martyrs and depicting Israelis as savages. A report on the Annapolis conference showed Israel being erased from the map and replaced by a Palestinian flag. Does this sound like a group ready for peace?

On the Israeli side, Olmert has stated that peace negotiations cannot achieve anything until the Palestinians show the willingness and ability to stop violence against Israeli citizens. Just last week, three Palestinian policemen murdered an Israeli in a drive by shooting in the West Bank. Clearly, Olmert's criterion is not being met.

Given all this, how could the United States believe that now is the right time to discuss peace in the Middle East?

Some propose that Bush is making a last ditch effort to solve this ancient conflict, as Clinton did in his waning days as president. Although this could be Bush's desire, he would not have called this conference for that reason alone. The evidence against a peace agreement in the near future is too strong for him to try to stake his legacy on what is certain to be a failure. Bush is well aware of both Clinton's failure, as well as his own disastrous attempts to create a Road Map for Peace earlier in his presidency.

The true motivations for the Annapolis Peace Conference become evident only when you take a more general look at recent U.S. foreign policy. The focus of the Bush administration has been on Iran and its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Bush has been intent on stopping Iran from developing these weapons by bringing international pressure. Bush has looked to the UN Security Council to support sanctions on Iran. Simultaneously, the United States has been building a coalition against Iran. Most Arab nations in the region fear the power of a nuclear Iran, which has allowed for the success of this movement.

The Annapolis Peace Conference brought these states together for the first time during this period. Although the technical topic was Israeli-Palestinian peace, the subject turned to Iran for some time behind closed doors. Reports emerging from the conference even said there were signs of Syria softening its stance towards the United States.

Wooing Syria away from the Iranians would completely isolate Iran and force them to give up their nuclear ambition.

Despite recent revelations that the Iranian nuclear arms program was paused in 2003, Bush has strengthened his rhetoric against the regime. Although progress on Israeli-Palestinian peace did not result from the conference in Annapolis, America achieved its main objective of the meeting, strengthening its coalition against Iran.

Dan Menaged is a senior political science major from Philadelphia, Penn.

News-Letter Predictions for 2008

"Iran will allow UN inspections in 2008, but President Bush still will not be satisfied."

— Dan Menaged, Opinions Contributor

"Despite court-ordered mandates, Britney Spears still does not wear underwear; habit spreads to her children, who are still not potty-trained."

— Jackie Huang, Opinions Contributor

"The best-selling album of the year will be Gospel Hymns for Gothics and Atheists, by Cease Pink and the Imperial Orgy. Or maybe Kanye."

— Marie Cushing, News & Features Editor

"Jon Stewart will win the presidency by write-in ballots."

— Katlyn Torgerson, News & Features Editor

"Pink is going to be the spring color this year. It's going to hit the runway hard."

— Mary Doman, Sports Editor

"Edwards is going to win the Democratic primary."

— Max McKenna, News & Features Editor

"The Pats will win the Superbowl, the Celtics will win the championship, the Blue Jays will become national champions in lacrosse and Michael Vick will get together a group of prisoners and form a football team to challenge the NFL in a game."

— Demian Kendall, Sports Editor

"I will take another 9 a.m. class and think it's a good idea but then realize I made a big mistake."

— Laura Bitner, Photography Editor

"McDonald's will open a restaurant in Tibet for the first time."

— Matt Hansen, Graphics Editor

"Steve McNair will retire. The Ravens will seek to acquire Donovan McNabb, but he'll end up somewhere else (Miami perhaps). Baltimore fans will be a bit disappointed, but not when McNabb will get injured during the first half of the season. Kyle Boller will step up and we'll have another successful season in which the Ravens reach the playoffs, but again fall short of the Superbowl."

— Dave Snyder, Opinions Contributor

"In the coming year, Lindsay Lohan will sober up and earn that Oscar. The apocalypse will soon follow."

— Whitney Shaffer, Opinions Contributor

Admitting the truth while remaining vigilant

By DAVE SNYDER

In a report issued on Monday, the National Intelligence Estimate, which is comprised of members United States intelligence agencies, said with "high confidence" that Iran halted its efforts to develop nuclear weapons in 2003. This brings new light to the discussion of Iran's intentions, especially after a similar report which was issued in 2005 stated that Iran was "determined to develop nuclear weapons."

The Bush administration, in a fashion not unlike that which it used with statements regarding Iraq, is now trying to cover for its prior erroneous statements. President Bush stated on Tuesday that he still sees Iran as a threat to produce nuclear weapons, saying that, "They had the program. They halted the program. It's a warning signal because they could restart it." This comment came despite the assessment's statement that, even if Iran were to resume its nuclear weapons program immediately, it would not produce enough highly-enriched uranium (one of the key ingredients in a nuclear weapon) until the middle part of the next decade, at the earliest.

Earlier on Tuesday, Democratic leaders criticized Bush's continually hyped-up rhetoric regarding the "threat" posed by Iran, despite his knowledge that an investigation into Iran's nuclear capabilities was, and had been, underway for the past year. Bush tried to claim that, in

August, he had only been informed that there was "new information" present about Iran which would "take a while to analyze," but he did not know the substance of this information.

Maybe it's just me, and maybe Hopkins has just fueled my intellectual curiosity so much that I was taken aback by this statement, but wouldn't any logically-thinking person, not to mention the leader of the free world, be curious to know what this "new information" pertained to? And I have a strong hunch that his intelligence advisor would not have told him that it was privileged information. Shouldn't the president seek to be as informed as possible about the situation regarding Iran, especially in the wake of the false lead-up to the Iraq war?

Sen. Joe Biden (D-Del.) echoed this sentiment, not restraining his opinions in the slightest: "Are you telling me a president that's briefed every single morning, who's fixated on Iran, is not told back in August that the tentative conclusion of 16 intelligence agencies in the U.S. government said they had abandoned their effort for a nuclear weapon in '03?" Biden said in a conference call with reporters. He went on to say, "I refuse to believe that. If that's true, he has the most incompetent staff in modern American history, and he's one of the most incompetent presidents in modern American history." Preach on, Joe Biden, preach on.

While I do not disagree with the no-

tion that Iran is hostile to American interests, it seems that the administration's constant warnings regarding Iran's supposed nuclear program were fully intended to again mislead the American public. Fortunately for us, the president cannot deny the facts this time and seems to be digging himself into quite a hole in regards to the situation with Iran.

The president feels that the sanctions which have been imposed in the past, both by the United States and the international community, have been the most effective in causing Iran to halt its pursuit of enriched uranium for nuclear weapons.

While it is impossible to know, without further investigation into Iran's halted nuclear program, what the exact cause was, Bush may very well be correct in this assumption. However, this is no reason to, as he urges, continue to press Iran with even stricter sanctions. Shouldn't we give them credit for not misleading us?

I don't believe we should relinquish all sanctions, as Iran is still a potentially hazardous threat to U.S. interests, but we must give some type of credit where credit is due, all the while ensuring, through continued vigilant surveillance and investigation, that Iran does not again begin to pursue a nuclear weapons program.

Dave Snyder is a senior political science major from Towson, Md.

America must focus

By PHILIP CASTROVINCI

In an era with huge forces that require the strength of a nation or perhaps a civilization, our focus on problems sometimes just convolute our solutions. Most problems discussed in the media can become fallacies when explored further. Global warming and the plight of the uninsured are often brought up as the cause of so many of the current problems in the world. Preliminary parlor discussions about them often lead to the fundamental questions that really no one cares about. The debate about these issues lack depth and understanding and, too often, become generalized and media-friendly.

Global Warming. Does it exist? Most scientists would say yes; many skeptics would say no. But who cares? Too many people just look at the implications of weather patterns and debate that. Rarely does the discussion turn to the political implications of humanitarian emergencies when global warming is talked about.

Katrina destroyed New Orleans. This is not the first time something like this has happened in the world: Cyclones destroyed southern Bangladesh and fires have devastated California. Rather than discuss the mismanaged water and the depletion of the aquifers on the West Coast, the media focuses

on this amorphous and controversial idea of global warming. Who cares that the Bush administration has a terrible and unadvised policy on forest management? It's global warming. Who cares that we let people live in New Orleans below sea level because the land is cheaper? We have global warming to deal with!

We are building houses deep in forests where they shouldn't be. We are forgetting about poor people in Bangladesh who have no where else to live but places where cyclones kill every year. No. The focus is always global warming. I believe the world is getting warmer, sure. But no one really knows what that means. So stop pretending.

The Uninsured. There are plenty of uninsured Americans in the United States and that number is getting larger? Why? America isn't what she used to be. Insurance coverage lost its foothold. OK. But in America, who cares? We are a country like any other with cultural values that can be compared and are often compared to those of Europe with "free health care." But, as my dad let me know well in advance of college, nothing is free. The problem with the comparison is that our values and expectations do differ.

Amartya Sen, the 1999 winner of Nobel Prize in Economics, explained that in the United States we have unemployment rates of less than 10 percent and that's how we like it. We also have double-digit

poverty levels, one of only two developed nations in the world to have that much (the other is Turkey). But in America, that doesn't bother us. Elections are based on employment, not poverty.

In France, unemployment is nearly 25 percent, but poverty is below 10 percent. How does that focus on insurance? Who knows. There are more MRI machines in Philadelphia than in all of Canada. That's what Americans love, and that is what we have. Equity, up until now, is not in the equation.

People are uninsured for many reasons, and the question always arises, "Should we have a universal health insurance like in Europe?" No two countries' systems are similar, and they all have their own problems. Many are moving more toward privatized care and cannot afford the rising costs on their global budgets, etc. A universal health care insurance system doesn't exist. If it does, please tell someone about it.

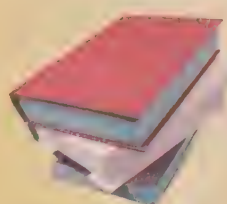
As we consider equity let us not make it the focus as we also need to consider other problems with our medical system: rising costs, artificial demand and quality controls, to name a few.

Don't let the big issues confuse the little ones. The world is a complicated puzzle and nothing exists in a vacuum. I wish I could blame my bad grades and freshman 15 on global warming, the uninsured and I'll throw the president in there for good measure, but I can't. There are many other problems you can't as well.

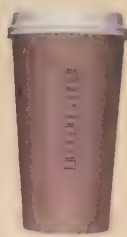
Philip Castrovinci is a senior public health major from Sarasota, Fla.

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DECEMBER 6, 2007



CALENDAR DECEMBER 6-DECEMBER 12

DEC.
6

Baltimore's new breed of "The Opera"

Pittsburgh's infamous Squonk Opera heads to "The Greatest City in America" to show us what this place is really made of.

Eventually, even we here at the *News-Letter* run out of superlatives to assign Baltimore. The world's epicenter of blue crabs, the nation's 12th-most dangerous city, the deathbed of Edgar Allen Poe ... sooner or later, Baltimore simply outdoes us.

Positive or negative, love it or loathe it, Baltimore always keeps us guessing, which is why the Pittsburgh-based Squonk Opera has decided to tackle the city in a way most never expected.

Enter "Baltimore: The Opera," the newest production of the Theatre Project, an exploration of what makes Baltimore alternately "the Greatest City in America" and the worst. Though opera itself doesn't make much of an appearance, rock bands, musical numbers, puppetry and video interviews with over 30 Baltimoreans are all in attendance at this performance.

In an interview with the *Baltimore Sun*, Squonk Opera creator Jack O'Hearn explained that out of the 11 other cities that have been staged as the heart of their "operas," Baltimore's citizens were the "most passionate, but also the most realistic" about their city.

Among those that talked with O'Hearn and Jackie Dempsey, writing partner for "Baltimore: The Opera," was Megan Hamilton, the creative director of the Creative Alliance at the Patterson and jazz singer Ruby Glover, whose interview for the "opera" is to be one of her last. Dempsey, at the end of the creation process, came away with a new-found love for Baltimore's "grit and art scene," and funneled her appreciation of local artists into the performance itself, incorporating Baltimore dance companies and artwork into the show.

Past Squonk Opera shows have pulled out all the stops to give their viewers a sense of place — including aerial performances in their ode to the Washington D.C. suburb of Columbia, Md. and video installations in their production of the Albany, N.Y. opera.

Those expecting a staid run-through of their hometown's genteel charm usually end up coming away from a Squonk Opera production thinking differently, to say the least.

Reviewers from the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, unsure what they would find when the Pittsburgh version was unveiled, admitted



COURTESY OF [HTTP://WWW.SQUONKOPERA.COM](http://WWW.SQUONKOPERA.COM)

The Squonk Opera comes to Baltimore in full force this weekend from the 6th to 9th.

that the production was "noisy, colorful and outrageous." Critics at the *Philadelphia Inquirer* were slightly more befuddled by the production, calling it an "abstract music video" for Philly.

Ultimately, though, "Baltimore: The Opera" is dedicated to presenting (C)harm City in a way we've never seen it — complete with rapid-fire bursts of song, music that moves from thundering rock to slithering jazz and

an overall eclectic personality that, just maybe, might say more about Baltimore as a city, than about the wacky whims of the directors.

"Baltimore: The Opera" will take place at the Baltimore Theatre Project of 45 W. Preston St., on Dec. 6, 7 and 8 at 8 p.m., and finally, on Sunday, Dec. 9 at 3 p.m. For more information regarding this event, call (410) 752-8558.

— Matt Hansen

Campus events

Thursday, Dec. 6

11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. (and Friday, Dec. 7). Homewood Student Affairs United Way photo fundraiser

HSA will host a pet photo contest to raise funds for United Way on Thursday and Friday of this week.

Please visit the "gallery" and cast your \$1 vote for your favorite photograph. On Thursday, visit Mattin Center's SDS Room, and on Friday, the Great Hall to view the entrants and vote for a winner, as well as enter your name in a raffle for a holiday treat.

8 p.m. – 9 p.m. JHU Jazz Band & Ensemble Concert

Free for students, this concert is worth that short walk to Shriver

Hall. The JHU Bands take the stage for a one-hour show.

8 p.m. Phi Mu's 25th Birthday Celebration

Come hang with the sisters of Phi Mu while they celebrate the sorority's 25th anniversary on campus with cake and *Grey's Anatomy* at the Hop Stop in the back of Levering. It won't be long before sorority sisters on campus are banned from talking to fresh-

men, so meet and greet while you still can!

Saturday, Dec. 8

2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Jordan McMullin of "Best New American Voices 2008"

The Barnes & Noble Johns Hopkins will be hosting Jordan McMullin, an up and coming author featured in Richard Bausch's "Best New American Voices 2008." Critically acclaimed novelist and short story writer Richard Bausch continues the tradition of identifying the best young writers on the cusp of their careers in this year's volume of "Best New American Voices," and McMullin is no exception.

8 p.m. – 9 p.m. The Vocal Chords Present: The Break-Up
Come see the JHU Vocal Chords' fall concert at Bloomberg Hall (in the Schaffler Auditorium).

Local events

Thursday, Dec. 6

5:30 p.m. Mount Vernon Place: A Monumental Occasion
Mount Vernon kicks off the holidays with the annual lighting of the Washington Monument. Festivities include performances,

strolling entertainment, refreshments and fireworks.

Saturday, Dec. 8

1 p.m. – 5 p.m. Wine Tasting at grand cru
Every Monday, there's an opportunity to hone your wine tasting abilities at grand cru (located at 527 E. Belvedere Ave.).

Sunday, Dec. 9

9:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Finding Space in a Busy Life: A meditation seminar on gathering wisdom during the holidays

The Vikatadamshtri Buddhist (2937 N. Charles St.) will be offering a seminar on meditation for \$30. All proceeds will go toward increasing peace in our world through educating people about meditation and Buddhist practice. The center provides meditation classes, taught by qualified local teachers, which are easy to understand and apply to our daily lives.

Monday, Dec. 10

7 p.m. The Stoop Storytelling Series Presents: Holidays from Hell, Part Deux: Stories About the Happiest Time of the Year
Last year's holiday show featured tales of mass vomiting, robbed

roles in the church pageant and a Christmas morning when one storyteller wore nothing but a Santa hat.

What good tidings will this season bring? Advance tickets (\$12) are recommended and can be purchased by calling (410) 332-0033 or by visiting <http://stoopstorytelling.com>. The show will take place at Centerstage, at 700 N. Calvert St. Music by Caleb Stine and the Brakemen, as well as cocktails, will begin at 7 p.m., and the storytellers go on at 8.

Tuesday, Dec. 11

Flamenco and Dinner at Red Maple

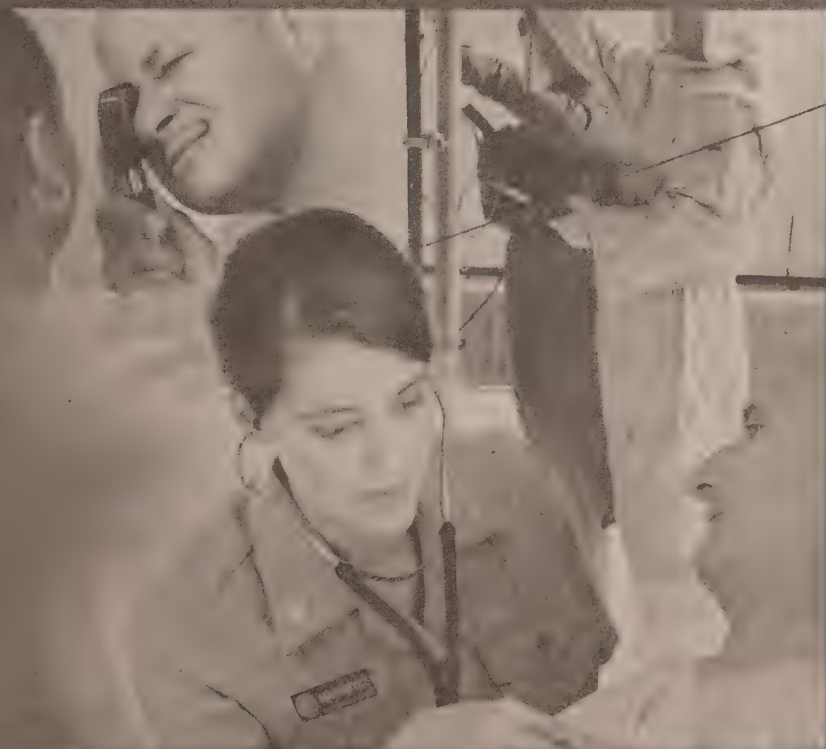
Live flamenco with Tamara Sol and Ricardo Marlow is the mainstay of Tuesdays at Red Maple. Those under 21 are asked to leave after 10 p.m. Red Maple is located at 930 N. Charles St.

Wednesday, Dec. 12

10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Art History 101: 55 Centuries of Art at the Walters Art Museum

The arts of the Ancient Americas will be the subject of this season's final session. Located at 600 N. Charles St., the Walters charges \$24 per session.

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MOVIE OPENINGS

O. Jerusalem

Opening at the Charles Theatre
Friday, Dec. 7

(410) 727-FILM or <http://www.thecharles.com> for showtimes



COURTESY OF [HTTP://WWW.UJEF.ORG](http://WWW.UJEF.ORG)

The struggle surrounding the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 is recreated in this epic drama centered around the friendship of two Americans — one Jewish, the other Arab.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Stoop storytelling continues with holiday show

By JOHN KERNAN
Arts Editor

Since February of 2006, the Stoop Storytelling Series has been entertaining audiences with true, autobiographical stories told by members of the Baltimore community.

The storytellers come from all walks — the organizers encourage anyone with a tale to tell to come forward and share — their motto being, “Everyone has a story. What’s yours?” The only stipulation is that the chosen story fits somehow into that month’s theme.

Those familiar with “This American Life” might find the Stoop’s tone familiar. Seven storytellers get seven minutes to tell their piece — and it always turns out interesting.

Recently, I spoke with Laura Wexler, part of the duo of Stoop producers (the other being Jessica Henkin). Wexler also teaches creative writing at Hopkins and is an editor at *Style* magazine. She was able to give me some insight into the origins and workings of the storytelling series.

According to Wexler, the idea for the Stoop originated after she saw a similar production in San Francisco, *Porchlight*. Immediately afterward, Wexler began to research and organize in order to bring such a show to Baltimore.

Modeled after both San Francisco’s *Porchlight* and New York’s *Moth*, the realization of the project became tantalizingly easy: They needed no set, no fancy equipment, just a stool and a microphone.

In February of 2006, the Stoop had its first show at the Creative Alliance in Patterson Park. That first show sold out completely, as did the rest of the season. Realizing that the Stoop was too big for the 250-seat Creative Alliance, it was moved to



COURTESY HTTP://WWW.STOOPSTORYTELLING.COM
Producers Laura Wexler and Jessica Henkin brought the consistently popular Stoop series to life. The next show is Dec. 10.

Centerstage in September of 2006, which allows a more breathable 540-person occupancy. These shows, too, sold out, with the exception of those shortsightedly scheduled to overlap with Ravens games.

On Dec. 10, the Stoop will be having its second holiday special show. Last year, the show was considered one of the best the Stoop had ever put on, and this year is expected to be no different.

Jews tend to have funny stories about Christmas.

— LAURA WEXLER
STOOP PRODUCER

Linda Perlstein, a writer, will be among the performers at the upcoming show. Wexler seemed particularly excited about her story because “Jews tend to have funny stories about Christmas.” Add to this the fact that Perlstein is a former mall-Santa elf, and there is no doubt that there is a good tale to be heard.

Some of the storytellers were specifically sought out by the producers. One of these was

writer Jonathon Scott Fuqua, who will be sharing one of his stories. Fuqua’s young adult novels have received many awards, and he is expected to bring with him an engaging new tale.

Many of the storytellers are former audience members who e-mailed the producers with a story idea.

Elizabeth Adamec, a professional dog trainer, attended a show, then came to the producers with a story about a “crazy New Year’s Eve.”

Some storytellers are recruited after the show, when three audience members’ names are drawn from a hat to give their own impromptu three-minute stories.

David Ettlin, a Baltimore journalist, was one such inductee who will be performing this coming Monday.

Wexler said that they rarely

turn someone down because of a bad idea — but only because of concerns about too-similar stories. With a theme like “Ditties that Define Us,” there is plenty of temptation for five stories about a breakup, or about someone’s first love. Instead, Wexler and Henkin vary the stories and provide a fast-moving, never-boring show. There might be a few resultant cuts, but someone with an original idea always gets a fair audience.

Wexler stressed the inclusivity of the Stoop — everyone is welcome, and no one ever feels out of place. She encourages students from Hopkins to come to a show and see just what goes on. Hopefully, she says, one of us will have a story to share of our own.

The Dec. 10 show is expected to sell out. Buy advance tickets at <http://www.stoopstorytelling.com>.

Book Review

Jonah Lehrer
Proust was a Neuroscientist
Houghton Mifflin
Nov. 1, 2007

By JOHNSON UKKEN
For The News-Letter

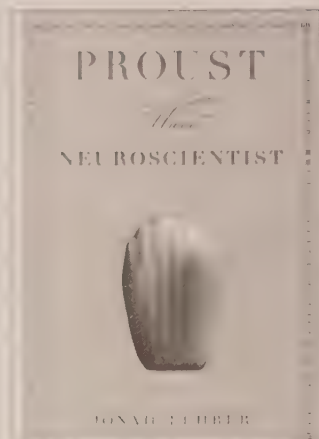
Science and art have long been at each other’s throats. Scientists declare that all life can be reduced to its fundamentals and, in so doing, be understood.

Artists, on the other hand, are adamant that the only way to approach an understanding of life is to analyze it creatively through the lens of an artistic medium rather than a microscope.

In his first book, *Proust was a Neuroscientist*, Jonah Lehrer argues compellingly for an ultimate truce between the two sides of this debate. His method is simple: With the subject of neuroscience as a battleground, he one-ups science over and over by using a variety of artists and their own innovative discoveries about the mind.

Lehrer claims that science shouldn’t be too quick to judge art and its merits, when, in the case of neuroscience, artists have intuited certain truths about the brain and its workings that scientists only discovered years afterward.

Lehrer is well-qualified to make this argument. A double-major in neuroscience and English from Columbia University and a Rhodes Scholar, Lehrer embodies the intersection of art and science. He also has exten-



sive experience on both sides of the fence.

He has worked in the lab of neuroscientist and Nobel laureate Eric Kandel, has studied with British literary critic Hermione Lee at Oxford and has worked as a cook in Le Bernardin, a famous French restaurant in New York.

Proust was a Neuroscientist is the culmination of Lehrer’s experiences. His multiplicity of interests and talents make his voice singular and authoritative.

First and foremost, *Proust was a Neuroscientist* is very accessible. Weighing in at fewer than 200 pages, the book is clearly written with the curious but amateur reader in mind.

He draws upon an impressive bibliography of literature and scientific papers, collecting the most important details and translating them for the lay reader.

Lehrer’s book is part biography and part philosophy. He provides fascinating anecdotes that look into the lives of famous artists and their unique artistic journey.

CONTINUED ON PAGE B5

Dynamic film enraptures with old Hollywood charm

By JACKIE JENNINGS
News-Letter Staff Writer

It’s easy to forget to what extent violence, CGI animation, foul language and tawdry sex dominate the movie industry. Easy, until movies like *Atonement* come along and remind us that films still can and should be invested in gorgeous scenery, complex, thoughtful storytelling and unselfish, profoundly believable acting from young talent.

Atonement, based on the novel by Ian McEwan, tells several stories which revolve around Briony Tallis, a 13-year-old aspiring writer living in England just before the onset of WWII. Young Briony, played startlingly well by Saoirse Ronan, witnesses glimpses of the love affair between her older sister Cecilia (Keira Knightley) and Robbie (James McAvoy). These voyeuristic peeks into a world of love and (not tawdry) sex that Briony doesn’t yet understand lead her later to accuse Robbie of a heinous crime he did not commit.

The film manages to be at times a crime thriller, a romance and a war film while never betraying any of the genres or seeming out of line in its shifts. The actors serving the subplot of the film’s crime, Juno Temple and Benedict Cumberbatch, are each excellent — Temple plays the precocious young victim aptly named Lola and Cumberbatch’s Mitchell nears being over the top in his pedophilia but instead hits the creepy nail on its repulsive head. The only real cause for acting complaint are Lola’s twin brothers, played by Charlie and Peter von Simpson, who, though humorous at times, seemed as though they were reading cue cards just off camera. However, their lesser talent could be simply in comparison to the enormous skill of the other child actors in the film.

As captivating as the crime committed may be, the true stars of the film are the young

lovers Robbie Turner and Cecilia Tallis. The film, directed by Joe Wright who also directed Knightley in *Pride and Prejudice*, is something of a departure for the actress. True, she is a young woman in love, but here she carries herself as someone older, less impetuous and at times even mysterious. In short, with *Atonement*, Knightley has successfully left girlish roles behind and is now established as a powerful leading woman.

McAvoy, too, is utterly disarming as Knightley’s love interest. His vulnerable yet playful Robbie is difficult not to fall in love with, a statement true of Knightley’s Cecilia as well. Therein lies the real achievement of Wright and screenplay writer Christopher Hampton — Robbie and Cecilia may not have much time to fall in love, but the audience has already fallen

for each of them separately, thus making it obvious that they belong together. Their relationship, though brief, is endowed with enough fire to convincingly burn the entire film, a credit to great directing, acting and writing.

But *Atonement* is also an astonishingly good war epic as well. The hospital scene between 18-year-old Briony (Romola Garai) and Luc (Jérémie Renier) depicts, more than any bloody, computer-enhanced battle scene, the agony



COURTESY OF HTTP://WWW.ALLMOVIEPHOTO.COM
Keira Knightley delivers a graceful performance as love-torn Cecilia in this film adaptation of *Atonement*.

of war. And the highest high of the film must be Wright’s depiction of the Allied evacuation at Dunkirk. Running almost five minutes, this single, steady shot of the defeated British soldiers waiting to be ferried home used real actors as extras, an actual destroyed sailboat for a prop and a movie house to film the scene. Though it cost over \$1 million to shoot, the grandeur of the scene is reason enough to see the film and evidence that sometimes doing things the old-fashioned way is worth the effort.

It is that feeling of old-fashioned romance that pervades the film through all its genres, and the quiet sense of tragedy that runs throughout the various aspects of the film which keeps us enraptured through some admittedly long segments following Robbie through France. It also makes the transition to the modern day late in the film so effectively jarring. We are brought to an elderly Briony (Vanessa Redgrave) and come to realize

that *Atonement* has really been a movie about writing as well as love and war. Much of the score is based around the clicks of a typewriter, Cecilia and Robbie first make love in a library and in the final twist, the film is a book (which, of course, it actually is).

Constant images of water and references to writing come to bear as we learn that *Atonement* is asking us basic questions about the nature of mistakes and what it takes to rectify them. And most importantly can writing, if it’s all we have to remember the past, become truth?

While *Atonement* may not leave us with a simple answer it does linger long after the theater lights wink on. As a romance, war epic and whodunit, the film stands unparalleled by any movie in recent memory. Those elements coupled with the questions of art and sheer beauty of the movie make it not only a shoo-in for Academy Award nominations but something like a modern-day classic.

HSO’s 25th season culminates in transcendental concert

By NATALIE BERKMAN
News-Letter Staff Writer

Recently dubbed “Baltimore’s other great orchestra,” by the city’s deputy mayor, the Hopkins Symphony Orchestra just had its 25th anniversary celebration concert on Friday, Dec. 1. Not only was it an impressive concert, but also a unique experience for the Hopkins Symphony Orchestra, Hopkins and all of Baltimore.

The Hopkins Symphony Orchestra, the only community orchestra in the city of Baltimore, has now been an official ensemble of the University for 25 years. To celebrate this momentous occasion, music director Jed Gaylin programmed a difficult but ultimately rewarding concert.

The orchestra began with a world premiere — “Sinkinetic”

by Matthew Stofferahn — and then performed Beethoven’s “Symphony No. 9,” which is, quite possibly, the most famous piece of music ever written, and certainly one of the most difficult.

Pieces such as these show what a brave and talented ensemble the HSO is. To premiere a piece, especially one as difficult as “Sinkinetic,” is quite a feat, but to perform that in addition to Beethoven’s 9th without an intermission is very impressive, and the HSO succeeded with ease.

This concert was a combination of present and past, and was clearly an overture to the future of this orchestra. “Sinkinetic” was composed specifically with the HSO in mind, for it was written by an alumnus of the orchestra. Matthew Stofferahn is

CONTINUED ON PAGE B5



COURTESY OF THE HOPKINS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Gaylin conducts the Hopkins Symphony Orchestra, the city’s “other great orchestra.”

ATONEMENT

Starring: Keira Knightley, James McAvoy
Director: Joe Wright
Run Time: 130 minutes
Rating: R
Coming to Baltimore Dec. 14

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Cult fave M.I.A. performs energetic set at Sonar

By CARA SELICK
Your News-Letter Editor

The line stretching around the block so far it almost went full circle should have been the first indicator that this concert wouldn't be like every other concert. The second was that the show was completely sold out. Friday night around 11 p.m., over two hours after Sonar opened their doors to those eager enough to buy tickets days in advance, the entire line finally snaked its way through the doors. By that time, a couple of openers had already come and gone and the crowd was booing down a perfectly good hip-hop artist. The air was heavy in anticipation of one little Sri Lankan girl, the reason we had all sacrificed our normal Friday nights and 20 bucks, the reason we had stood in the freezing cold for two hours.

I squeezed my way through a crowd as diverse as the city itself to find myself front and center, just as the lights dimmed and strange noises began to come from the stage. On screens set up on the back of the stage, what I can only assume was some sort of Asian politician began to talk passionately. Unfortunately, the subtitles were hidden by the massive speakers, so nobody knew what exactly he was so impassioned by. Tensions grew as his speech lagged on. Finally he ended on what I can only assume was a high note, and all of a sudden the stage was stormed by M.I.A. and her posse of backup singers and DJ. The center crowd broke out into something resembling a moshpit, and, to avoid being trampled, I backed out towards the outside of the crowd, where I was still able to see, but from a safe distance.

The one thing about M.I.A. (real name: Maya Arulpragasam) is she's weird and crazy; nobody can deny that. Her music is an eclectic mix of techno beats and London slang and foreign influences spanning the globe. But whether you find her just weird or totally awesome, for this one night all that mattered was the DJ behind her supplying the steady rhythm



M.I.A. rouses the crowd with electric beats and stage antics, creating a sweaty, enthusiastic environment perfect for dancing.

with which the entire venue exploded. The concert turned into almost a club scene. It was just one massive dance party where the artist singing/rapping the songs happened to be jumping around onstage in a purple leopard print get-up, instead of just streaming out of your speakers. The most amazing part of this party was that everybody who was wise enough to buy a ticket in advance was invited. Dancing shoulder-to-shoulder (and sometimes even closer) were college students and Baltimore residents alike.

M.I.A.'s set was on top of its game. She definitely knew exactly what she was doing when she chose which songs to play at this particular event. While her new album, *Kala*, may have some more out-there songs which are not only weird lyrically, but also hard to dance to, she only played those that were highly "danceable" and also well-known by her fanbase. Some highlights were "Boyz," "Jimmy," and her encore of "Paper Planes." She also made sure to throw in a few of her best

songs from her first album, *Arular*, including "Galang," "Bucky Done Gun," "U.R.A.Q.T.," and "Sunshowers."

Although her stage name may mean "Missing in Action," Maya by no means slacked on her energy and made sure to feed the crowd as much as they fed her. She constantly moved across the stage, going between jumping and dancing. She even went out into the crowd a couple times, welcoming fans' hands around her small waist as they held her up over the audience. Seeing as her new album has been described as having "sources as varied as funk, carioca, Baltimore bounce and the occasional ludicrously placed sound-effect," it's no wonder that this Baltimore crowd completely ate her up, 100 percent.

M.I.A. also employed the use of children as backup dancers to great effect. The audience loved these pint-sized booty-shakers almost as much as, if not more than, M.I.A. herself.

While the show itself was supremely executed, my main com-

plaint lies not with M.I.A. and her crew, but rather the concert-goers themselves and perhaps Sonar and the security. The majority of the audience was just way too drunk. I understand the desire to drink during or pre-game a concert which is advertised as a dance party, however it was to an extent where it was at times unsafe and out of control. What was supposed to be dancing turned into moshing. Drunk groups unable to stand up pushed up against and fell into people, annoying them to the point of starting fights. And while security kept people from messing up M.I.A., they didn't do as good of a job of keeping people from messing up other people and ruining the experience for everybody else.

All-in-all, I urge everybody to listen to both of M.I.A.'s albums, and if you are the least bit interested in either of them, or if you just like to shake your booty, I highly recommend you go see her live. And as a general plea for concert-goers everywhere: Please don't drink and dance. Please.

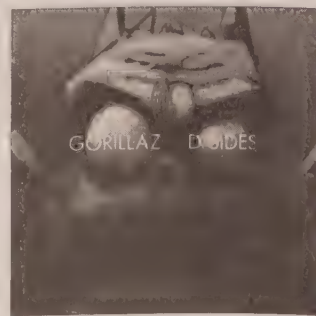
New Vibrations

D-Sides

Gorillaz

Virgin Records

Nov. 20, 2007



There is an inherent danger in releasing a B-sides album. First, these were, after all, rejected songs — how much can we really hope for? Second, if you choose to include early versions of songs that did make it in the end — as do Gorillaz on *D-Sides* — one may wonder, why am I not listening to the final version? Was it not better? On their most recent B-sides effort, Gorillaz avoid these problems on many tracks — and slam right into them on others.

For those keeping score, this makes two B-sides albums and two albums proper for Gorillaz. Not necessarily a disreputable ratio, but one wonders what sort of gems may have been produced with a full-fledged effort from Damon Albarn, a former Blur member and Gorillaz's only permanent member.

Many of the songs weren't what one might expect from Gorillaz, though a B-sides album gives some leeway. For example, "68 State" is a neat little electric groove, but I found myself waiting for a Gorillaz beat that never came. "Hong Kong," an interesting Chinese-influenced number, was likewise good but certainly not what a Gorillaz fan would be used to.

Also included on the first disc were new versions of familiar *Demon Days* tunes. "People" would eventually become "Dare," and I am glad it did: "People" is missing that certain something.

I suppose one might have found "Rockit" on *Demon Days*, or perhaps on a forthcoming Gorillaz album. However, it comes off as gimmicky in the end, despite a quality some might call "fun" or "original."

The second disc is comprised (dutifully?) of remixes of *Demon Days* songs. The issue with remixing already electro-heavy Gorillaz songs is the lack of space to bring in a new, loud beat or interesting effects — they're all there already. What do remixing DJs do but add a thumping bass line and rearrange and mix in some samples?

A bit harsh on DJs, perhaps; there have been plenty of excellent electronic remixes. But when we remix "Dare," it had better get interesting quickly, or we long for the original. There are three remixes of both "Dare" and "Kids With Guns," with varying degrees of success.

"Feel Good, Inc." was given a good polishing by Stanton Warriors, adding an interesting beat to an otherwise mellower song.

My personal favorite, "Dirty Harry," was given the standout remix of the second disc. It was rewritten and performed in Chinese for the New Year's celebration, preserving the melodic charm of the original but adding an interesting Mandarin sonic lilt.

D-Sides has some worthwhile tracks and would be a respectable effort (if a bit disjointed) if presented by some lesser band. However, we have come to expect great things from Albarn and Gorillaz, and we feel a bit let down when we are not wowed by their musical stylings.

— John Kernan

The Game Guru: Push My Buttons

Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock

By ALASSANE SOUMARE
News-Letter Game Reviewer

Bring out the hero in you — well, the *Guitar Hero*, that is. Before having played my first note on the music simulation game, there was no way fathomable of getting me to listen to anything with the word "rock" in the genre.

However, the unimaginable happened, and I'm finding myself downloading ZZ Top's greatest hits off of iTunes, or rummaging through the countless CDs in a vintage record store to find the Rolling Stones' debut album. What happened? *Guitar Hero III* on Wii happened.

The third installment in Activision's guitar simulation series takes the winning formula and continues running with the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" attitude. For those unfamiliar with the previous two installments, here's the breakdown of the game: you have a guitar controller (slightly smaller than its real counterpart), which has five color-coded but-

tons located near the top and a strum button near the bottom.

On the screen the same color-coded buttons appear and it's up to you to hit the buttons while strumming the strum bar on the controller to correspond to those falling down on the screen. Simple, right?

There are four different difficulties: easy, medium, hard and the dreaded expert. The differences between these different difficulties are the amount of notes that you can press and the speed at which the notes race down the screen. On easy you only have to worry about having to press the first three buttons, the first four on medium, all five on hard and expert being just like hard, but with the exception of being ridiculously fast.

Compared to the past two *Guitar Hero* games, number three is a drastic step up in difficulty, hence the best thing would be to start off with the previous two for a taste of what's to come. For those braver rockers, however, there's a nice little tutorial,

which helps with everything from learning the basics to practicing on nailing those tricky solos.

The newest addition to the series is it is the first to include a full-fledged career mode with an actual story, following your band's rise from a local no-name garage band to all-out legend, spanning locations including the U.K. to Japan to the fiery depths of hell itself.

This gives you a sense of progress, which the other two lacked and is presented through cartoon cut-scene segments. However this all feels too superficial, as if the storyline was put in at the last minute for almost no reason at all.

In addition, there are a whopping 70-plus new tracks ranging from "Welcome To The Jungle" to "Cherub Rock" giving a real varied library of tunes to jam to. Lastly, there are boss battles in which you go head to head with some of the biggest names in rock such as Tom Morello from Rage Against The Machine.

Before playing the game I knew maybe one or two songs, but now I've memorized enough lyrics and melodies to rival Slash from Guns 'N Roses/Velvet Revolver.

There is also a co-operative mode where you and a friend can both strum away and conquer the career mode together or the head to head mode in which you battle each

other for all-important bragging rights.

The catch, however, is that you will not be able to purchase

the stand-alone extra guitar controller until next year. As a result, you have two options, either buy the game-guitar package again which retails for \$80, or find someone else who has one and invite them over for a jam session.

The guitar simulation is available for all three major game consoles (Wii, Playstation 3 and Xbox 360) however, the main difference between these versions is that the Wii utilizes a wireless guitar and many of the functions are motion sensitive because of the fact that you place the Wii-mote inside the guitar, which gives you a more immersive experience.

This comes at a slight price though in the form of inferior graphics and online capabilities. Unlike its competition, the Wii only has a Wi-fi connection and no real network compared to the Xbox's Xbox Live Network and the Playstation Network. All other aspects of the game are the same across the various consoles, so if you happen to have all three of them, it really doesn't matter which one you choose.

The main appeal of the game lies within it capturing the feeling of really rocking out like the pros and not having to learn a single real-life chord.

Will it make you want to learn how to play a real guitar? Maybe, but most likely not. Will it make you want to eat, sleep and breathe *Guitar Hero III*? Absolutely! So do yourself a favor and let that inner hero in you out, because who knows, you may very well be the next Bret Michaels.

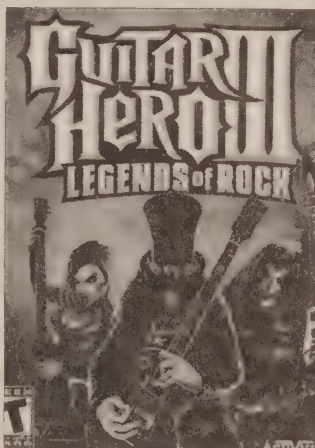


PHOTO BY LAURA BITNER/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

A student rocks out with *Guitar Hero III*, the latest addition in a series of virtual guitar games.

Audio Day Dream

Blake Lewis

Arista/J Records

Dec. 4, 2007



Can an *American Idol* contestant really make it in the world of music? While Carrie Underwood and Kelly Clarkson have succeeded, few participants have been heard from after their elimination from the show. The jury is still out on Blake Lewis, the runner-up in this past season.

With his new album, *A.D.D.* (Audio Day Dream), Blake Lewis has stepped away from the beatboxing he is famous for and instead takes the white boy, hip-hop, dance music path. Of course, there will be the inevitable comparison to the wildly popular Justin Timberlake, who came from a similarly, although slightly less, embarrassing background.

Lewis started beatboxing when he was 17, inspired by various a cappella groups, and he eventually joined one himself called KickShaw. As college students know, you have to have a pretty decent voice to be a member of an a cappella group. The lack of instruments exposes any vocal flaws.

Lewis proved to America that he wasn't just a beatboxer but also a competent singer. The real test however is the release of his first post-*Idol* album, which is precisely where most *Idols* fail.

Quite surprisingly, the album is not half bad. The first track is one of those bizarre, 30-second introductions that don't really connect to the album but the producers decided to stick in anyway. After that, however, "Break Anotha," Lewis's single, is probably the best on the album. This could actually be the next big club hit, crazy, no? Granted, the lyrics are painfully cheesy, "He's a gentleman lover, get you undercover," but who actually listens to the lyrics of pop songs anymore? This track is incredibly danceable and balances the ridiculous lyrics with an incredible beat.

As is "Know My Name," featuring Lupe Fiasco. Although

the verses is at best, bearable, the chorus, bridge and solo by Lupe are slick and catchy.

Lewis takes a turn for the worst, however, in the slower, more Maroon 5-esque songs such as "Hate 2 Love Her," "Surrender" and the ballad "How Many Words." And please, for your own good, just skip "Without You" and "I Got U" altogether; they are a waste of album space and nauseatingly sugary sweet. Needless to say, Lewis will not become the nation's best new troubadour.

Yet, despite some of these crash-and-burn tracks, Lewis redeems himself with "Whatcha Got 2 Lose" (what's with numbers as words?) and "BShorty Grabs Mic" the only song on the album that showcases Lewis's real talent as a beatboxer.

At first, "Gots to Get Her," which is inspired by "Putting On The Ritz" (i.e. it has the same melody), appeared to be an original attempt at a song. However, with repeated listening, it became more a success shot at a fun power-dance song.

The album is actually quite long, with 16 tracks, unusual not just for any performer, but especially so for a new artist. The production company would have done well to cut some of the songs, notably the failed attempts at romantic ballads and the more "alternative" tracks, improve the remaining songs, and release a normal-length album, filled solely with catchy dance beats.

However, most of the songs are worthwhile, especially for the DJ or Justin fan looking for the next high. So, as hesitant as one might be to actually listen to an *Idol* album, Lewis puts his best foot forward with this album's surprising success.

— Sarah Sabshon

34th Street electrifies the season

By LEAH MAINIERO
News-Letter Staff Writer

Baltimoreans typically equate the neighborhood of Hampden with anything eccentric or unique. A small working-class neighborhood west of Wyman Park, Hampden exudes a style a la 1950s retro charm, affordability and Baltimore (pronounced “Bawl-mer”) attitude. Needless to say, it should not come as a surprise that this neighborhood known for its boutiques, beehive hairdos and “Hon” bumper stickers has developed a quirky Christmas custom of its own.

Hampdenites dub it the “Miracle on 34th Street,” a vivid spectacle of shining lights, sculpture and holiday scenery that dazzle the senses and illuminate the façades of 25 Hampden rowhouses. The traditional “decking of the halls” and ringing in of the Christmas season would not be complete without a Hampden twist. Anyone can set up a Christmas tree, but it takes a special type of person to display a full-size Christmas tree from his rooftop or set a towering eight-foot-tall tree composed of hubcaps on his front lawn. Other 34th Street treasures include a miniature Ferris wheel bearing Santa Claus, bicycle tire snowmen, giant snow globes and reindeer made entirely from wo-

ven branches. Residents string strands of colored lights across the street itself, arcing from the top of three story houses on one side of the street down to the second story roofs of the other side. They also display twinkling snowflakes from their porches, place sleighs and reindeer on their roofs and arrange nativity scenes and inflatable sculptures in their yards. One house even displays a two-story Christmas tree made up completely of green light strands. The myriad bright, blinking lights, decorations and lawn statues are cheerful and even slightly overwhelming, but definitely a sight worth visiting.

“Miracle on 34th Street” originated 18 years ago, when resident Bob Hosier began decorating his home, and has grown steadily larger and crazier year by year. Though the actual size of the display is relatively small (running just one block between Chestnut Road and Keswick Road), it is world-famous, drawing a police estimate of over 45,000 visitors per year. Residents welcome visitors and even invite them into their homes to view their Christmas decorations and artwork. On some nights, Santa and Mrs. Claus even make appearances in the neighborhood to greet visitors.

Businesses around 34th Street also put their best foot forward

and go all out on Christmas displays. Café Hon, a 1950s-themed restaurant, displays hot pink tinsel and lights in its windows to match with the gigantic signature flamingo statue standing over the entrance, while various antique and vintage shops, bookstores and restaurants do their part to add color and light to the Avenue (a four-block strip along 36th Street filled with shops and eateries). The large number of boutiques located on this half-mile strip make for affordable and unique Christmas shopping; many of the wares — from crab-shell Christmas ornaments to framed artwork, vintage clothing to local beauty products — are one-of-a-kind.

34th Street is approximately a five-minute cab ride (one-mile walk) from the Hopkins campus, making it easily accessible by cab or by foot. Hampden's light display runs from dusk until about 11:00 p.m. every night from Nov. 24 to Jan. 1. On New Year's Eve, 34th Street will also host its own New Year's celebration with a special Hampden version of New York's Times Square Ball. Keep a lookout for Bob Hosier, the very same man who began the 34th Street tradition, dressed as Baby New Year — having a picture taken with him on New Year's has become a sort of Baltimore tradition.



LAURA BITNER/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
In a silly homage to Baltimore's most iconic figures, Hampdenites turn old Natty Boh and Old Bay cans into festive decorations.

One student's 24 hours as a Witness thespian

By CARA SELICK
Your News-Letter Editor

Although I may be unofficially listed as a Theater Arts minor, having never participated in any shows on campus, I never really thought of myself as an “actor.” In fact, my part in Witness Theater's 24-Hour Theater Experiment wasn't what I had originally intended. I attempted to sign up as a writer for the show, but since all writing slots were already filled, and because I had seen the show last year and thought it was basically just an awesome concept, I finally decided to put those acting skills from John Astin's classes to use.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with the 24-Hour Theater Experiment, or Witness Theater in general, let's pause for a brief exposition. Witness Theater is an on-campus theater group comprised solely undergraduates. All their shows are written, directed and acted by Hopkins students. They generally put on one full-length play and a few one-act showcases per academic year.

Their 24-Hour Theater Experiment fits into these guidelines perfectly, except for one small twist: The showcase involves writing, casting, rehearsing and performing four one-act plays, all within 24 hours.

Late Friday night, after the Buttered Niblets' performance, a small group of writers, directors and actors met in Arellano Theater, props in hand, ready to get to work. The writers (working in pairs) selected props to work their scene around and headed off to write, the rest of the group heading off to sleep.

After a full night of sleepless playwrighting, the writers submitted their work and the directors met at 8 a.m. sharp on Saturday to decide who got to direct which play. At 9 a.m. the actors were called in to read lines from each play, and by 10 a.m. the directors had cast their shows and

we all split up to rehearse. Lines had to be memorized within hours. Each group was allotted only a few hours in Arellano to work on lighting and blocking. At 8 p.m. the show went up, and a couple hours later it was all over, 24 hours after it had begun.

While this may sound like an exhausting and strenuous process, being pressed for time somehow amped up the commitment in everyone involved, and what one might normally complain would take days if not weeks was accomplished within hours or even minutes. Fifteen minute shows were completely memorized within an hour or two. Blocking and characterization both spilled out seamlessly and effortlessly as everyone involved was forced to get to know the parts within the first read-through.

To give you an idea of what the shows are like, let me explain my experience. I personally was in *Red Sox Nation and the Downfall of Society*, written by Rob Kasten and Paxson Trautman. Mitch Frank was our director. In a nutshell, the play was a comedy about post-apocalyptic Pennsylvania where a girl (me) is trying out for an illegal Underground Powderpuff Penguin Football League.

As explained by the team captain (senior Julie Sihilling), the sport is illegal and underground due to the fact that Boston won all major sports titles for three consecutive years, angering God (a Phillies fan), bringing about the apocalypse and forcing a government ban on sports and sporting equipment. They use a penguin as a football because their way around the ban is to insert footballs up penguins' ... well, you get the picture.

As the two girls realize that the penguin-ball is in fact a bomb, and the locker room they're in is inescapable, the one-act spirals deeper and deeper into illogical absurdity. While

this may sound a little crazy, the show was in fact very coherently put together, especially considering that the writers only had a night to write it and both are engineers. And who can find fault a play that includes the Soulja Boy dance and slimy spaghetti in a Ziploc bag?

The first show of the night was *The Mountain*, written by seniors Adar Eisenbruch and Sal Gentile. It was directed by junior Oleg Shik. In it, senior Chris Chuang played Samson, the overbearing husband, senior Amy Hellman played Guinevere, the fed-up princess housewife, senior Joe Micali played the prince she has an affair with, and Eisenbruch provided the voice for a talking deer head.

Carve came next, written by senior Dave Haldane and junior Laura Gordon, and directed by freshman Pierce Delahunt. In this one-act, freshman Rebecca McGivney plays the girlfriend bringing her boyfriend home for the first time on Easter. Things go awry when the boyfriend (freshman Mike Alfieri) reveals to her a strange tradition his family has: They carve jack-o-lanterns the night before Easter.

The Viking Age was written by juniors Sarah Addison and Erin Donohue. Charlotte Chen directed the actors in this comedy about misled teenagers and online dating. Junior Christen Cromwell played the teenage daughter and senior Jennifer Petsche played the mother. Senior Patrick Connell played the viking whom, naturally, the daughter had fallen head over heels for on <http://www.dateaviking.com>.

The greatest part of the experience, in my opinion, was not so much the getting to go on-stage after only about eight hours of rehearsal and make a complete fool of myself (although I definitely have no complaints about that either!) but rather that I was able to meet a group of near strangers and within seconds

Proust delves into neuroscience

Jonah Lehrer's first book marries scientific discovery with artistic pursuits

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B3
-rneys while chronicling some of the latest achievements and news-makers in the field of neuroscience.

It deals, in turn, with writers, a chef, a painter, a poet and a pianist, dissecting their artistic achievements and simultaneous neurological discoveries.

Virginia Woolf, anovelist known for her stream of consciousness work *Mrs. Dalloway*, was constantly afflicted by psychological disorders. Thus, she became obsessed with introspection, spending her time between afflictions writing her thoughts on the mind and self.

She discovered that there is a “self” which binds the actions, the impulses, the myriad thoughts to a conscious purpose.

As Lehrer describes, this abstraction is lately being accepted by a growing number of neuroscientists who cannot as yet get past the ultimate question of how the brain creates the mind.

Another case study, Paul Cézanne, faithfully reproduced life as it appears before interpretation by the visual cortex decades ahead of neurological studies on the topic.

Auguste Escoffier, chef extraordinaire, realized the existence of a fifth taste (apart from traditional sour, sweet, salty and bitter) now dubbed “umami” by neuroscientists, which is derived from reduced meat stock. He never stopped extolling the virtue and necessity of this taste and based nearly all of his recipes upon it.

The impetus for this book and the most fascinating case study is that of author Marcel Proust.

In his sprawling masterpiece of introspection, *In Search of Lost Time*, Proust came to the conclusion of the mutability of memory and the emotional connotations of smell and taste long before neu-

roscentists proved them experimentally. His recollections begin with the tasting of a French cookie, a madeleine, which throws his mind into an acute state of nostalgia, flooding him with recollections of his childhood.

What follows is a profound exercise in memory where Proust describes semi-autobiographical experiences. He discovers, though, that his memories

are neither quite accurate nor truthful representations of the past and that they change, ever so slightly, with every remembrance.

Neuroscience has discovered that every subsequent remembrance changes the neuronal associations that originally hold the memory.

Thus, Lehrer declares, “our memories ... are fiction.”

Lehrer's writing is a pleasurable blend of art and science. He simplifies difficult and abstract neurological concepts into rich and creative prose. At the same

time, he describes analogous artistic discoveries convincingly, which serve to make his claims all the more persuasive.

In this respect, perhaps, Lehrer makes his most effective argument: His writing is a testament to the marriage of art and science.

Bursting from every page are lucid, at times poetic, explanations, clarifications, and analogies that serve to carry the reader through Lehrer's profound and often exciting reasoning.

DNA is described as nature's “astonishingly complicated prose” while the scientists who denied the existence of a possible fifth taste are reduced to “haughty lab coats.”

Pre-Chomskian linguists are no more than “verbal botanists” who were “content with classification and observation” and the Central Dogma of biology views humans simply as “elaborate sculptures of protein.”

The reader is left with more questions than answers, which is precisely the goal of this book. It is the kind of book one will want to return to long afterward to meditate on its ideas and arguments. This book will set your neurons ablaze with possibility.

Hopkins Symphony fuses past and present

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B3
a resident physician in Newark, Del. with a degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, but he is also an HSO alumna with a B.M. in music composition from USC. The piece was truly, as Gaylin described, “a confetti of sound.” Modern music can be difficult to appreciate to the untrained ear, but this piece wasn't unpleasant or overly complicated. With brass fanfares and other bursts of sound created by pizzicato, mallets and woodwind flourishes, the piece built up as it progressed. However, although a certainly unique piece, the melody was as developed as expected.

At times it just sounded like noise and notes with no definite purpose. It must have been a difficult piece to prepare because it was so complex. The orchestra performed it well, but it was perhaps a poor choice to perform it in the same concert as Beethoven's 9th — it couldn't possibly compare. At least they performed “Sinkinetic” before the Beethoven.

After “Sinkinetic,” the HSO jumped right into Beethoven's “Symphony No. 9.” The first movement was a good introduction to the rest of the piece — they achieved a big sound but were obviously saving the best for last. The second movement was particularly impressive: Their style was light and perfect for a scherzo. The few pauses were in sync and overall, it could be appropriately described as “perky.” The third movement was beautiful, flowing and completely in tune, which is impressive consider-

ing the thin texture of the music, making it difficult to cover any mistakes. Slow and elegant pieces are often much harder to pull off than fast and loud parts, but the HSO performed the third movement with perfection. While the first three movements are nice, the real focal point of the concert (and any concert that includes Beethoven's 9th) was the fourth movement. This movement further expanded the orchestra into, not only a group of Hopkins and community musicians, but also the Johns Hopkins Choral Society, the Baltimore Masterworks Chorale and four superb soloists. This movement was incredible. The soloists began with bass Robert Cantrell, who opened the vocal section with a rich, dark voice. The four voices, Lori Hultgren, Fenlon Lamb, Richard Crawley and Cantrell, all blended and projected well, despite the sheer volume of sound from the orchestra and the chorus. “They make it easy for me,” Gaylin said. This was “the latest, greatest, best performance!”

Baltimore's Deputy Mayor came to the concert to surprise the HSO with a gift. Dec. 1 is now Hopkins Symphony Orchestra Day, which came complete with a plaque. Shriver was filled to the brim — people were even standing in the back to hear the concert. Overall, this was certainly a celebration for Hopkins, but the year isn't over yet. This concert may be over, but the 2007-2008 25th anniversary season of the Hopkins Symphony Orchestra has just begun!



MON. JUMBO WINGS 25 CENTS

WED. 1/2 PRICE 8 OZ. BURGERS

\$8.50 LARGE CHEESE PIZZA
EVERYDAY

POWER HOUR DAILY

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Gifts for the gadget-holic who has everything

By DENNIS KO
News-Letter Staff Writer

Some people are easy to shop for on the holidays: the clothes horse, the bookworm, the adventurer. But there's one group of friends that's almost impossible to please: the gadget geeks.

It seems they always already have the latest camera, laptop or cold-fusion laser (not to mention these tend to be a bit expensive for the average gift-giver).

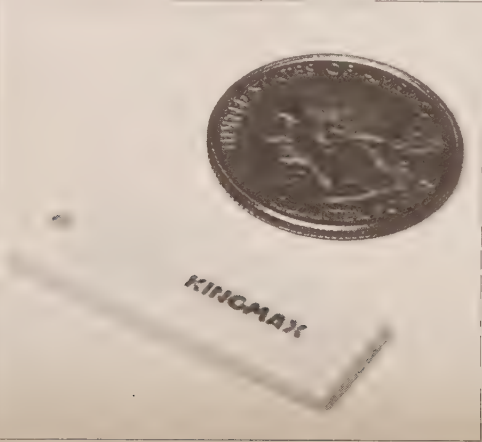
No problem: Our intrepid tech reviewer gives a few very cool ideas sure to please Dexter in every category.

Under \$25:
KingMax Super Stick (\$14.95)
2 GB USB 2.0 Flash Drive
Available at <http://www.amazon.com>

The KingMax Super Stick lives up to its billing as the world's thinnest flash drive. The drive's size is comparable to a stick of Trident or Orbit gum.

It's essentially half the width of a USB port, so when you plug it in, only half of your computer's port is actually occupied by the flash drive.

A hand strap and keychain ring are included so you don't lose this tiny gadget.



COURTESY OF [HTTP://WWW.OVERSTOCK.COM](http://www.OverStock.com)
KingMax Super Stick is the world's thinnest USB flash drive.

Leatherman Squirt (\$25)
Available at <http://www.amazon.com>, Target, and Wal-Mart

The Squirt is a multi-tool from Leatherman. It's similar to your typical Swiss Army Knife, but it does each of the traditional functions much, much better.

There are two models, the S4 and the P4. Each model has a main function: full-sized scissors for the S4 and full-sized pliers for the P4.

Along with this main function, there are also tweezers, a knife, three screwdrivers, a nail file, a can opener and a ruler included in a small package.

The Leatherman is made in the United States and sports a nifty lifetime warranty for heavy users.

Under \$50:
Footbags (\$36-\$42)
Available at <http://www.foofshop.com>

The Footbag is for the laptop lover who wants a stylish laptop cover to protect that thousand-dollar investment.

Footbags come in a variety of artistic designs on a range of fabrics, including cotton and corduroy, ensuring a style fit for anyone.

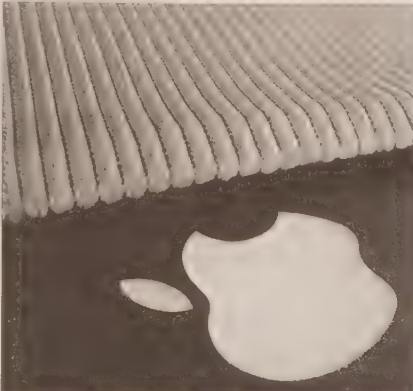
Despite the fashionable cover, the case is nicely padded with a very slick satin liner. Footbags also offers cases for a variety of cameras and iPods.

Apple's Aluminum Key-

board (\$49)
Available at <http://www.amazon.com>, The Apple Store, Best Buy and <http://www.newegg.com>

This is Apple's new super-thin keyboard that resembles the MacBook's keyboard. The result is a keyboard that rises no more than half an inch off your desk.

The aluminum keyboard works with both PCs and Macs and even includes two built-in



COURTESY OF [HTTP://WWW.COVERTO.OVER.CO.UK](http://www.CoverItOver.com)
The Footbag provides stylish safety for your laptop.

USB ports for connecting your mice and peripherals.

Under \$100:
Creative Zen Stone Plus (\$69.99)
Available at Circuit City and <http://www.creative.com>

The Zen Stone Plus is Creative's mp3 competitor to Apple's iPod shuffle. What's different is that the Zen Stone Plus actually has a small display so you can see what song is playing or even fast forward to the song of your choice.

Also, while the iPod Shuffle has only one GB of storage for \$79.99, the Zen Stone Plus has two GB of storage for \$10 dollars less, a great buy for people with a bigger music library.

Like the Shuffle, the Stone comes in five bright colors with interchangeable covers to suit your mood.

The "Ex" (\$69.99)
Knife set with unique holder
Available at <http://www.OverStock.com>

This one's for the ladies who are holding a grudge on a particular guy or maybe on guys in general. This knife set contains five basic kitchen knives.

It's the stand that makes this product stand out. The stand is shaped like a male stick figure, with the slots for the knives along the



COURTESY OF [HTTP://WWW.PEEP.CULTURE.COM](http://www.PeePCulture.com)
The "Ex" serves as both a knife holder and voodoo doll.

stick figure's body. The resulting holder looks like a guy with knives in his head, chest, stomach and legs. Great item to spice up your boring kitchen!

Over \$100:
Canon SD Powershot SD1000 7.1MP Camera (\$175.99)
Available at all electronics retailers

Canon's low-end, no nonsense camera is priced aggressively for point-and-shoot users.

It's got a high resolution, good enough for most general use and a standard 3x zoom. Most users will find that the size of this camera, as well as the ease of use, really make this camera worth buying.

Be sure to pick up an SD card for extra memory with this camera. (See a previous week's review.)

Rock Band Bundle (for Xbox 360 - \$169, PS3 - \$169, PS2 - \$159)
Available at Toys 'R' Us, Best Buy, Circuit City and Gamestop

This is EA Games's rival to Red Octane's famous *Guitar Hero 3*. *Rock Band* differs from *Guitar Hero* mainly in the fact that *Rock Band* allows the user to play one of three roles in a band: guitarist, drummer and singer.

It's like combining *Karaoke Revolution* and *Guitar Hero* with a drumming game. Up to four people can play at once, so you really get the feeling of forming a band.

This is perfect for those who want to live out their fantasies of being a rock star.

Though a bit pricey, the game includes a drum set, a guitar and a mic, along with the game itself, so the high price is justified.

For *Guitar Hero* pros out there, don't get this game hoping to play the guitar only, since the songs are somewhat easier than those on the *Guitar Hero* game. Get this for the "band" aspect.

High HIV rates in Thailand linked to rare viral strain

By TIFFANY NG
News-Letter Staff Writer

Worldwide, more than 33 million people are currently living with HIV or AIDS. But the effect of this disease is felt much more strongly in poorer areas, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia.

AIDS is the third-most common cause of death in low-income countries and the fifth-most common in middle-income countries, but it doesn't even make the top ten in the wealthiest areas of the western world.

Despite the disproportionate impact of HIV and AIDS in such regions, little research has been performed specifically in these areas. For instance, it is known that different subtypes of the virus are found in different parts of the world, but this finding has not been rigorously correlated with disease progression.

Two recent studies led by Kenrad Nelson of the Bloomberg School of Public Health and scientists from Thai research institutions and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention surveyed people in Thailand over a span of nearly two decades to determine the amount of time between infection with HIV subtypes and death.

In one study, men in the Royal Thai Army were surveyed to determine whether HIV infection had already taken place. This was done via seroconversion analysis, whereby the blood is examined for new antibodies against HIV.

If these antibodies are present, then one can confirm that the patient is HIV-positive and was infected relatively recently. Men were tested every six months to determine an accurate window of infection.

Follow-up studies were then performed up to 14 years after seroconversion. Results showed that the median time from seroconversion to death was 7.8 years and from seroconversion to development of clinical AIDS

as 7.2 years for HIV subtype E, a strain most prevalent in Southeast Asia.

In another study, scientists tracked the progression of the disease in Thai couples infected with HIV. They found that the median survival was 8.2 years and that the survival times did not differ significantly between men and women.

Both studies indicate that survival in Thailand is significantly lower than in high-income countries as well as in Africa, which both have median survival rates of about 11 years. This difference can perhaps be attributed to the prevalence of the various subtypes of the virus.

Subtype E is the most prevalent viral strain in Southeast Asia, whereas it is quite rare in Africa. Compared to other subtypes, subtype E is associated with greater amounts of the virus in the body shortly after infection as well as higher rates of sexual transmission.

Furthermore, this decrease in survival time might be ascribed to generally lower immunological status in the Thai population compared to those populations from other regions.

In addition, since the AIDS epidemic is relatively new in Thailand, the survival difference could be a product of the decreased virulence or activity of the virus in a population over time.

The implications of these studies are profound. First, they bring to light key differences in the progression of the various HIV subtypes. Knowledge of matters such as these can help to tailor prevention and treatment of the disease based on the geographic location and subtype of the patient.

Additionally by effectively demonstrating the significantly lower survivability of HIV in Thailand, these studies can help to raise awareness in countries in the region where AIDS has only become an issue over the last decade or so.

Research Briefs

Chromosomal changes found in pancreatic cancer

Duplication or deletion of large segments of chromosome is known to play a role in a variety of diseases, from Down syndrome to many cancers. These alterations can lead to the loss of necessary genes or the production of a large amount of extra protein.

Researchers in the pathology department at the Hopkins School of Medicine recently analyzed pancreatic cancer cells for chromosomal changes. They used a technique called comparative genomic hybridization (CGH) to search for alterations.

In CGH, chromosomes from diseased cells (such as tumor cells) and normal cells are ex-

tracted and labelled with different fluorescent dyes. The chromosomes then hybridize, or bind, with normal unlabelled chromosomes. By measuring fluorescence levels in diseased-normal and normal-normal chromosome pairs, scientists can determine whether duplications or deletions are present.

The Hopkins group detected a large number of common changes, particularly affecting chromosome 18, which may contain one or more risk genes for pancreatic cancer. These changes may turn out to be common causes of pancreatic cancer.

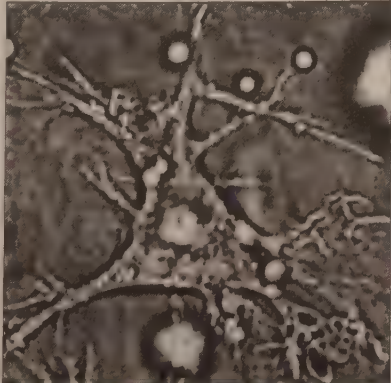
— Stephen Berger

Diesel pollution stimulates immune response

It has long been known that pollution from cars and trucks has negative effects on the human body. A recent study from lung specialists at the Hopkins School of Medicine demonstrates that diesel pollution can have a direct effect on inflammatory pathways in the lungs and may be linked to asthma attacks.

The researchers looked at dendritic cells, which have an important role in the immune system and are associated with inflammation. Scientists presented dendritic cells with exhaust from cars and trucks collected in the Fort McHenry tunnel in Baltimore.

Diesel exhaust stimulated dendritic cell activity in several ways. It enhanced their uptake of antigens



COURTESY OF [HTTP://WWW.WIKIPEDIA.COM](http://www.Wikipedia.com)
Pollution stimulates the activity of dendritic cells.

Abnormal membrane protein causes hypertension

By BEN KALLMAN
News-Letter Staff Writer

High blood pressure in the U.S. has reached epidemic proportions. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30 percent of adult Americans have it, 277,000 Americans died from it in 2002 and 90 percent of middle-aged adults will develop it before they die.

Obvious need has pushed scientists to better understand high blood pressure's causes and to find some effective therapies.

To this end, a group of Hopkins researchers, led by Rajini Rao at the School of Medicine, believe they've identified a gene linked to the most common form of high blood pressure.

Most of the time, high blood pressure — the technical term is hypertension — is called "essential" or "primary."

Unlike a related disorder called secondary hypertension, which usually arises from some other underlying condition, essential hypertension has no specific, treatable cause and is generally thought to be influenced by both behavioral choices and genetic predispositions.

Hypertension is a problem of balance. For their cells to

function properly, all animals — from the lowliest nematode to the haughtiest human — have to maintain a balance between fluids and electrolytes (dissolved, positively-charged ions) in and around every cell.

Primarily, this is accomplished by transporting electrolytes from inside the cells out into the bloodstream or vice versa.

It's not surprising, then, that people with essential hypertension almost always have malfunctions in electrolyte transport, while those with secondary hypertension are generally normal.

What's more, a particular type of transport — called sodium-lithium countertransport (SLC) — is strikingly correlated with essential hypertension.

Indeed, the presence of increased SLC activity in red blood cells has been relied on for almost 20 years as a tool in diagnosing essential hypertension.

During SLC, one lithium ion from inside a cell is exchanged for one sodium ion from outside the cell. This is mediated by a specialized protein called an antiporter, which is inserted in the cell's membrane.

Until the present study, it was unclear which type of antiporter

was involved in SLC.

Many scientists viewed SLC as a modification of another electrolyte-transport process that exchanges protons and sodium ions and is used to regulate a cell's pH. (The antiporter in that case is called the sodium-hydrogen antiporter or NHA.)

Lithium ions, the theory went, would simply replace protons in the exchange with sodium.

More recent evidence, however, suggested that SLC and sodium-hydrogen transport don't actually involve the same antiporter protein.

The drug amiloride, which is known to act on certain antiporters, blocks sodium-hydrogen transport but not SLC.

The objective of Rao and her team, then, was to find an amiloride-insensitive antiporter protein.

To do so, they analyzed over 550 genes whose codes they conjectured could produce the desired protein.

They came across two previously undescribed genes, now called NHA1 and NHA2, which bore striking similarities to sodium-hydrogen exchangers already identified in *E. coli*.

What's more, the team found that versions of NHA1 and NHA2 exist in all animals, in-

cluding nematodes, flies, puffer fish and mice.

The researchers hypothesized that the human version of NHA2 was the antiporter responsible for SLC in our bodies, and they uncovered some convincing evidence to that end.

By inserting the NHA2 gene into blank yeast cells, they observed that the protein it produced resided in the plasma membrane (as any antiporter is obliged to do) and, more importantly, that its function was entirely insensitive to amiloride.

In addition, they detected the presence of human NHA2 in red blood cells, where increased SLC is associated with essential hypertension.

Nonetheless, the NHA genes are still considered "candidate" genes for essential hypertension.

Many points remain unclear. Are there simply more NHA2 proteins in people with the disorder, or are those proteins merely overactive in hypertension?

Understanding genetics and molecular biology could also help answer questions about lifestyle. What effects do behavior and diet have on SLC activity? The country's blood pressure continues to rise, but only time will tell.

HIV/AIDS RATES BY REGION

Sub-Saharan Africa: 6.6 to 7.8 percent	Latin America: 0.5 to 0.8 percent
Caribbean: 1.1 to 2.7 percent	North Africa & Middle East: 0.1 to 0.7 percent
Eastern Europe & Central Asia: 0.6 to 1.3 percent	Oceania: 0.5 percent
North America: 0.4 to 1.1 percent	Western & Central Europe: 0.2 to 0.4 percent
Southeast Asia: 0.4 to 1.0 percent	East Asia: 0.05 to 0.2 percent
Source: UNAIDS	

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

APL instrument images twin Martian moons

By **SAM OHMER**
News-Letter Staff Writer

From its unique vantage point high above the surface of the Red Planet, the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter has not only been able to image our chilly cosmic neighbor but has also caught glimpses of its two small moons.

Phobos and Deimos, named for two figures in Greek mythology who associated with Mars, the god of war, were recently imaged by CRISM, or the Compact Reconnaissance Imaging Spectrometer for Mars, an instrument package on board the orbiter which is operated by the Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory.

Although the namesakes of the two moons were known to inspire terror across the ancient world, APL's discoveries are not in the least bit frightening.

The satellite has mapped and analyzed Mars's two moons with unmatched resolution. CRISM has obtained the best images yet of Mars's smaller satellite, Deimos (the god of terror), which is hardly worth its title at a mere 12 kilometers or 7.5 miles in diameter.

Scientists also analyzed the geologic composition of Phobos better than ever before because spectral measurements from CRISM span a wider band of the electromagnetic spectrum than previous surveys of the two moons have allowed. This allows more data to be collected about the chemicals within the moon.

The greater range of data available for analysis makes it possible to determine with greater precision the quantities of certain key substances on Phobos's surface, especially compounds containing iron, water and carbon.

With the latest CRISM measurements, the APL team has also been able to correct certain previous assumptions about the moons.

For instance, it has previously been thought that the two moons



Phobos, the larger of Mars's two moons, is probably an icy asteroid captured millions of years ago by the Red Planet's gravity.

are made of a primitive or relatively unprocessed cosmic material known to be prevalent in solar systems before planets begin to form and which are also found quite prevalently in the outer asteroid belt.

However, it is now believed that the two tiny satellites are actually composed of an even more primitive material commonly found in the outermost solar system.

These so called "d-type" materials are still thought to contain water ice and elemental carbon left over from the earliest days of the solar system's formation.

This finding led the APL team to conclude that the moons are

not a product of a collision that caused parts of Mars to be ejected into orbit, but rather that Phobos and Deimos are most likely two primitive asteroids that passed by Mars at some point in the distant past and were lucky enough to be embraced by Mars's greater gravity.

Furthermore, with better spectral analyses, the APL has concluded that, as opposed to the previously held idea of a pair of grey moons, Phobos and Deimos are actually reddish in color, though Phobos does exhibit a large grey streak of ejected materials extending over a portion of its surface.

As far as moons go, Phobos

and Deimos aren't much to brag about. They are tiny; from the surface of Mars, Phobos would appear to be a third of the size our moon appears from Earth. Deimos lags far behind even that, appearing as nothing more than a bright star.

The moons behave strangely, too. Phobos has an orbital period so short (approximately seven and a half hours) compared to Mars's rotational period (about 24 and a half hours) that it appears to set backwards, from west to east!

These findings are just the latest data from the CRISM satellite, which has the mission of investigating Mars and its system, from its chemical composition to its climate patterns to its terrestrial surface features.

CRISM and the rest of the instruments on the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter continue to challenge and expand our knowledge of our nearest planetary neighbor.

By **BARBARA HA**
News-Letter Staff Writer

Drug delivery methods have made great improvements in both ease of use and efficiency over the last several years. Slow-dissolving tablets, plastic coatings and now techniques that use nanotechnology have all allowed medicines to be delivered to specific tissues at specific doses and times.

These drug delivery methods range from oral pills to miniaturized targeted devices with control over the release of drugs. These tools serve as great aids in delivering drugs, spatially in providing high anatomic specificity, lower dosages and sustained doses with minimal fluctuations.

Recently, scientists have developed ways to improve these models to be "smart" systems that possess the ability to cater to each patients' needs. Such smart drug delivery systems could revolutionize the pharmaceutical industry, but to do so they must be ready for mass production. For example, they should be manufactured inexpensively, loaded easily with drugs, delivered with minimal trauma and be easily tracked, programmed and controlled.

A process called lithography has recently been used by researchers at the Hopkins School of Engineering to help create smart drug delivery systems.

Lithography is an advanced method for printing on a smooth surface — but variations on lithography have been used for centuries around the world for printing and coloring various materials. By etching tiny circuits onto a surface, lithography allows miniature devices to be used for computation, memory storage, wireless communication, remote sensing and high-fidelity imaging.

Lithography creates patterns at the nanometer to millimeter scale and allows microelectronic devices and mechanical systems to be fabricated en masse on silicon wafer substrates. Although lithographic methods hold great potential for the development of more advanced and success-

ful drug delivery systems, they have the limitation of creating only two-dimensional patterns, which significantly limits their functionality.

Three-dimensional patterning allow for a wider range of functions in the targeted device. It also creates a greater surface area to volume ratio in the device, which allows for better control of drug delivery.

The Hopkins group developed a way to use lithography to create three-dimensional circuitry. First, a three-dimensional structure is planned out on a two-dimensional template that is interconnected by a set of hinges. Once this complex is activated, the hinges cause the template to fold into a three-dimensional structure.

In many ways, this is similar to drawing a template for origami or a paper airplane onto a sheet of paper before folding it up. The pattern is already there, in two dimensions; folding "activates" the pattern and transforms it into a useful, three-dimensional object.

The Hopkins group applied this technique to the development of drug delivery devices. By creating a two-dimensional template for their device, they were able to design a capsule that targets drug delivery in controllable ways. Their device, once it reaches the market, could have wide uses in medical care.

One important feature of the new product is its flexible design, which allows it to change shape and size to pass through various tissues. A gold coating creates a smooth surface that should minimize attacks by the immune system. Additionally, the metal coat allows the capsule to be detected by MRI, allowing doctors to follow the delivery of the drug in real time.

Further studies are needed before this product can be tested in humans and used to deliver drugs in a clinical setting, but this new approach seems to have a variety of advantages over traditional drug delivery systems. "Smart" delivery of medicines within the body may soon be a reality.

Attention regulates recognition of objects

By **ALICE WU**
News-Letter Staff Writer

One of the most well-disguised of all optical illusions is the trick the human brain plays when an object is visually perceived.

An important component of object recognition, and visual processing in general, is the separation of what neuroscientists call "figure" and "ground."

A figure is an object of interest in your visual field. It could be your professor's head in front of the chalkboard, the tree you're about to bicycle into or the words on your computer screen. The ground, on the other hand, is the background of an image.

It might not seem obvious, but separating figure and ground is

actually an incredibly complicated (and necessary) process in visual perception.

There is good evidence that the separation of figure and ground in the brain is associated with your attentional state as well. This makes sense: It is important for the soon-to-be-unfortunate bicyclist to recognize the tree, but more importantly, he needs to be paying enough attention to register that the tree is not just some other object in his visual field but rather something to avoid.

To determine whether the visual recognition mechanism of figure-ground organization is related to selective attention, researchers from the Krieger Mind and Brain Institute on Homewood campus studied the responses of

neurons in a part of the visual cortex in monkeys performing a shape discrimination task.

They found that attention affected the perception of shapes when several objects were in the visual field. Border ownership signals were stronger with figures on top (or in the front of the visual field) versus figures that were partially occluded or cut off, indicating that they were further back in the visual field.

Responses were decreased when the monkey was trained to focus on the back of the visual field — in other words, when it focused on the ground rather than objects. These findings demonstrate that attention can be used to skew the perception of images and scenes.

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YOUR NEWS-LETTER

The pros and cons of Inter-session A cappella revealed: an inside view

By NATALIE BAER
News-Letter Staff Writer

Thanksgiving has passed and the end of the semester is in sight. Dreaming of a long, relaxing month at home? Or considering Inter-session?

Inter-session is a three-week long “academic enrichment” period, and this year, it runs from Jan. 7-25. If you are on the fence about whether to come back to Hopkins early to take additional classes, here are some anti-Inter-session and pro-Inter-session arguments:

Anti-Inter-session:

Hopkins is a stressful place, and classes make it that much more stressful. Two semesters



CONOR KEVIE/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
Take advantage of Inter-session as a time to visit Hawaii.

of dedicated study is enough — why would anyone want to take more class? On top of this, Inter-session classes rarely satisfy distribution requirements (most are only worth one or two credits) and some require additional papers and/or midterms and finals — all in the span of only three weeks.

Additionally, for the hyper-motivated, time spent taking “for fun classes” during Inter-session could be spent doing something more productive — applying for internships, attending a short study abroad or teach abroad program or even working a temporary job.

Got a grandmother in India and a grandfather in Thailand? Many students with family far away choose to take the time to visit. Even those who live closer to Baltimore may choose to stay home and bond with family or take a much-needed break from dorm life.

Finally, Baltimore is a cold place in the winter, and choosing between lying out in the Ca-

ribbean sun and hiding out on D Level, many students would select the former. Then again ...

Pro-Inter-session:

Inter-session classes are free, fun and fabulous. Graded pass-fail, there is no need to beat the grading curve — just don't fail. It's like first semester of freshman year all over again! This takes a lot of the “must succeed” pressure off classes.

Classes are generally interesting, and many classes are taught by TAs who are genuinely interested in the topic. This year's class selection includes “The Stand-Up Comic in Society,” where the class concludes with students presenting their stand-up comedy routines, “Italian Elements I,” a condensed and complete first-semester Italian class, several short study abroad opportunities in places such as the Galapagos Islands, Ghana and Florence, classes such as Media & P.R. in the Big Apple, which includes a trip to New York City, and even Introduction to Flying (yes, an airplane), taught by President Brody.

Is stress making your friends either robotic and neurotic? Students tend to be more relaxed during Inter-session than during the semester. There is the opportunity to explore the Baltimore area or to go to museums, movies, the Inner Harbor or the Towson mall, just to name a few places. There are generally more parties and more people partying during Inter-session as well. Therefore, these three weeks are a great time to get to make friends and get to know people better. Finally, for those who have prepaid for dorms and meal plans, why not take advantage of what's already been paid for?

Thus, Inter-session is a great opportunity for those who may have “nothing better to do” in the three weeks from the 7th to the 25th, but is not necessarily for everyone. Most students will stay for one or two Inter-sessions during their time at Hopkins, though there are those students who have never stayed and those who return year after year. There is also another option for those who do not want to take classes but don't like the prospect of living at home for an extra three weeks: Many students who return to take advantage of the campus facilities (dorm, food, gym, library) and bum around.

By SUZANNE GOLD
For The News-Letter

It's hard to say exactly what drew me to the world of a cappella at Hopkins. I always loved to sing but never thought of dedicating most of my collegiate career to matching notes and syllables with 15 or 16 other crazies. I always loved making weird noises but never dreamed I could find a place in which doing so would be beneficial, indeed, beautiful-sounding. Let me take you back about a year ago, when I was a wee freshman ...

At parties, I would stand in a corner with my friends, bobbing my head to the music. When I heard some JT come on I'd scream “Tha's mah song!” and run on to the dance floor, like any other freshman girl.

Once I got there, though, I noticed something. While all the people around me were rubbing up against each other and swinging their hips, I was bobbing my head in time and shifting my weight from foot to foot, sort of squatting with the music. Occasionally I threw in a hearty snap.

A friend of mine pushed her way over to me and asked what I was doing. I honestly didn't know; I had always danced like this. My friend said, “Honey,



LAURA BITNER/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
The Octopodes belt out the hits during one of their much-publicized concerts.

you've got a problem, and I know just how to fix it.” The next day she took me to sign up for auditions for the various a cappella groups on campus. I was nervous, as the only singing experience I had was in the shower! Nevertheless, I got into a group, and I've been bopping ever since.

The a cappella phenomenon is largely limited to the realm of the college campus. Originally, a cappella was experienced in the form of barbershop quartets and classical choirs, but after the 1990s, the popularity of a cappella exploded on college campuses. Whereas there were originally only about 250 a cappella groups in the United States before 1990, the number rose to about 1,000 groups within 5 years (according to Wikipedia).

Some of the largest universities are home to a dozen or more a cappella groups. What I think is great about a cappella at Hopkins is that there are so many groups to choose from. A fan can choose from cultural and religious a cappella, all-male and all-female groups, comedy groups and regular coed groups. There's something out there for everyone.

I've decided to help you understand what it's like to be part of this strange world by defining exactly what the members are not.



LAURA BITNER/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
The AllNighters croon their way into girls' hearts.

Hopefully, by dispelling some common misconceptions, I can help you understand more fully just how a cappella operates at Hopkins.

Members of a cappella groups, for example, do not walk around campus singing in full voice (half voice, sometimes; humming, all the time). They also do not always speak in harmony with one another, although they have tried.

Even though at a cappella concerts, music directors distribute the note in a very awkward, drug-deal sort of way, there is nothing sinister about a pitch pipe. Also, members of a cappella groups don't communicate in accapella syllables ... all the time.

If you aren't familiar with a cappella syllables, some popular ones are “doo wah” and “jhem.” The Vocal Chords, for one, have been known to use such syllables as “jehr” or, my personal favorite, “rekf bah.”

Members of a cappella groups are usually a mellow bunch, complaining about hemiolas and high G-sharps rather than homework assignments or boyfriend/girlfriend troubles. Ask any member and they'll tell you: A cappella is not for the faint of heart. You have no idea what doing the a cappella bop for an hour during a concert can do to your thighs!

A cappella at Hopkins is a lot of fun, especially during a cappella season, that special time at the end of each semester when each group gets out there and shows you what they can do. It's the most wonderful time of the year.

YOUR tracks

Compiled by Damien Kendall

A night of drinking, carousing and general merry-making is fun, but you usually end up paying the price in the morning. Headaches, nausea and utter exhaustion can easily put a cramp in your day. The hangover is a time when all you want to do is sit back, relax and avoid loud noises and bright lights as best you can. Unfortunately there's no proven cure for the hangover, but there are ways to make it better. Here's a list of songs that are just right for the morning after.

“Here Comes the Sun” by the Beatles — The sunlight pouring through your window will seem blinding at first, but after listening to this song, it won't seem half as bad. Harrison's light guitar strumming and Lennon's lullaby vocals are the perfect way to start your day.

“End of the Movie” by Cake — One of Cake's best and most underrated songs. Though the lyrics are somewhat of a downer (it's about growing old, being abandoned by your friends, getting tortured and not committing suicide), this song makes up for it in its melody with a bluegrass feel, rich with quick acoustic arpeggios and a violin solo that will bring tears to your eyes.

“Lollipop” by the Chordettes — How can you not smile when you listen to this gem from the '50s? No matter how rough your night was, this will bring a smile to your face.

“There it Was” by Gomez — Warning: This song may put you to sleep. The acoustic guitar melody is faint and distant, and Ian Ball's vocals sound like he's singing to a baby at bedtime.

“Cinders and Smoke” by Iron & Wine — This song is similar to the one above. Both are great songs, but unless you want to plunge into a long nap, take these two with a few cups of coffee. However, if a nap is what you're after, basically anything by Iron & Wine will do the trick.

“Lay Lady Lay” by Bob Dylan — This song displays a change in Dylan's vocals, which he attributed to quitting smoking. His voice is deep and low in this serenade, unlike his usual nasal vocals in other songs. However, if “Highway 61 Revisited” follows “Lay Lady Lay” in your iTunes library, proceed with caution, because the circus noises that occur throughout the song will only make that headache worse.

“I'm Into Something Good” by Herman's Hermits — The opening lines of this song (“Woke up this morning feeling fine”) may not reflect your current situation, but this early '60s tune will definitely get your feet tapping and your fingers snapping.

“Somewhere Over the Rainbow” by Israel “Iz” Kamakawiwo'ole — When you've got a headache that feels like a volcano about to erupt, what could be better than a peaceful Hawaiian melody? The ukulele is just what you need right now.

“That's the Way” by Led Zeppelin — Unlike most of their other hard rock songs, this song is gentle, calm and just plain beautiful. The song is dominated by acoustic guitar and mandolin, with almost no drumming. If this suits your fancy, the entire album (Led Zeppelin III) has the same feel with a few exceptions (“Immigrant Song” and “Celebration Day”).

“Take a Walk on the Wild Side” by Lou Reed — This transvestite ballad delivers a gentle blues melody. The instrumentation is somewhat muted throughout the song, and Lou Reed dominates with his mellow vocals.

“Through the Fire and the Flames” by DragonForce — This may not seem like an ideal choice considering your situation, but think about this. You've been lounging around all morning. It's time to get out of bed and get on with your day. Go for a run. Crank out some homework. Do something. The electric guitar in this song screams at the speed of light and delivers the equivalent of an adrenaline shot.

How to deal with winter sickness while at Hopkins

By JULIE DISCHELL
Staff Writer

If there is anything worse than enduring the last week of classes at Hopkins with exams finals coming up, it's having to deal with all that stress while sick. This was my fate last semester when I got mono around the time of Spring Fair. It was downright horrible. Not only did I have a Gen Chem midterm the last day of class, but also a quiz in lab, and tests in French, Spanish and health policy. I (and my GPA) managed to survive that semester fairly well, though, and here are some things I learned that can help you when you are sick.

Definitely go to Health and Wellness. It's not going to cost you anything and it is a good starting point for medical care. It's pretty close to most of the freshman dorms, but if you are really sick and it's too far away, you can call the escort van service. That's a very useful piece of information that I don't think they broadcast too well because people would probably abuse it. If you are sick or unable to walk, you can call the van to take you to class or Health and Wellness during the day. That's what it's there for. I took it all the time when I had mono and couldn't make the trek from Wolman to Health and Wellness. If you don't want to have to wait forever there, you can also call and make an appointment. Personally, I found Health and Wellness useful. You will hear different

opinions about it, but it is really something you need to see on your own. When I first felt sick, it took them a couple of visits to figure out what was causing it, but then again I had also gone to Union Memorial which did not consider running a test for mono. Health and Wellness also gave me free Gatorade and Sudafed, which was nice.

I would not recommend going to Union Memorial to figure out what illness you have. When I went to figure out what was wrong with me, the wait in the waiting room was ridiculously long, and I had to wait again once they put me in a hospital bed. One way to get quicker service there, I learned, is to cry. Even after all that, they couldn't figure out what was wrong with me and they gave me drugs that made me even more tired. The whole experience cost me about eight hours and \$25.

On the other hand, if Health and Wellness is closed and you are seriously injured, your options are limited. When my roommate shut her hand in a car door last semester, Union Memorial was very prompt and helpful. You could also visit the other hospitals in

the area. In fall of 2006, I went to Johns Hopkins Hospital to get a second opinion on an injury. While somewhat far, you can easily take the JHMI shuttle to get there. Once in the emergency room, the wait was short, and the doctors were very nice. He even called my father to explain what was going on with me. Mercy Hospital and Good Samaritan are two other good hospitals in the area. There are also doctors' offices in the Wyman Park Building.

Another very important thing to do is to ask for help. Be it from your friends or your teachers. If you have an incapacitating illness like mono, tell your teachers! They will usually lessen your workload for you. If you find out that you're sick through Health and Well-

ness, they will send an email to Dean Boswell, who in turn will email your teachers and tell them what's up. When I was sick I was excused from a chem test and given extensions on some of my papers. As far from the truth as it may seem, some teachers at Hopkins actually are compassionate people are care about the welfare of their students. It is equally important to tell your friends. You should not suffer in solitude. While they are certainly no substitute for your parents, your friends want to help you and have you feel better.

Being sick anywhere sucks, but it doesn't have to be hell. There are plenty of available resources and people wanting to make your life easier. You just have to know where to look.



ANDREA NELSON/PHOTOGRAPHY STAFF
Getting sick at school is never fun, but the wonderful staff at Health and Wellness love to help.

CARTOONS, ETC.

your Horoscope

Aries: (March 21 - April 19)
Editors at the *News-Letter* would love to go to your *Project Runway* party but they're too busy PUTTING OUT A PAPER!

Taurus: (April 20 - May 20)
"Best friend" is a term reserved for the girl that will poison your ex after he cheats on you. I love that girl.

Gemini: (May 21 - June 20)
Be all that you can be for me does not mean joining the army. I'm afraid of guns and I'm not very disciplined ...

Cancer: (June 21 - July 22)
Wary men lead longer lives so watch your back this month for those creepos.

Leo: (July 23 - August 22)
Of all the cars in this city, why did they have to break into mine? I don't even have a radio. Lesson here: don't bring your car to school.

Virgo: (August 23 - Sept. 22)
Office politics can get really nasty so while your moon is in the seventh house avoid your broom closet hook-up.

Libra: (Sept. 23 - October 22)
Relationships are tricky around the holidays. Do you bring them-home to meet the 'rents. Your star is saying "No."

Scorpio: (October 23 - Nov. 21)
Because you accidentally kissed your roommate's girl you have to repent and buy him that Sonic vs. Mario game for Wii.

Sagittarius: (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)
Things people say may hurt you this month, but you can get back at them by giving them poo for Christmas.

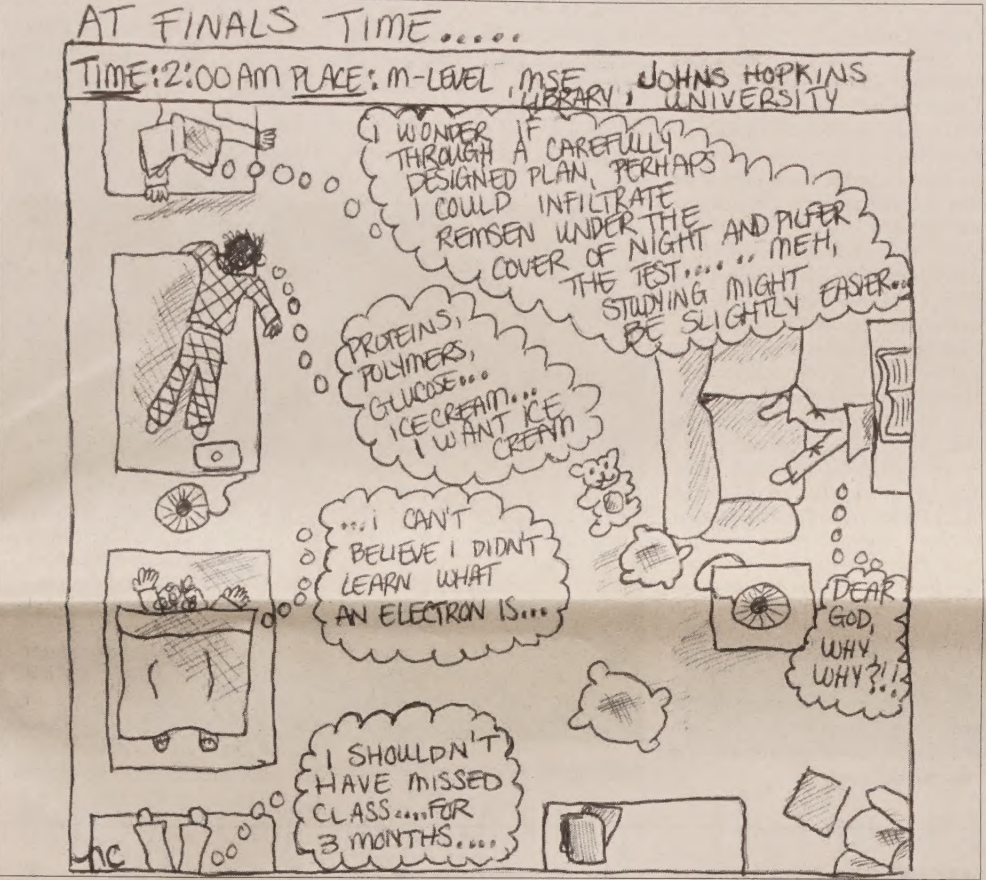
Capricorn: (Dec. 23 - January 19)
Could you be any lamer? The library is so last semester. I study on the top of Shaffer now. Yeah, it's the cool place to cram

Aquarius: (January 20 - Feb. 18)
Get out of town for winter break and Intersession. You don't need to hang around this Hopkins dump. It smells here.

Pisces: (Feb. 19 - March 20)
Ugly faces make ugly brides and ugly brides make ugly babies! So this month, try not to make any ugly babies.

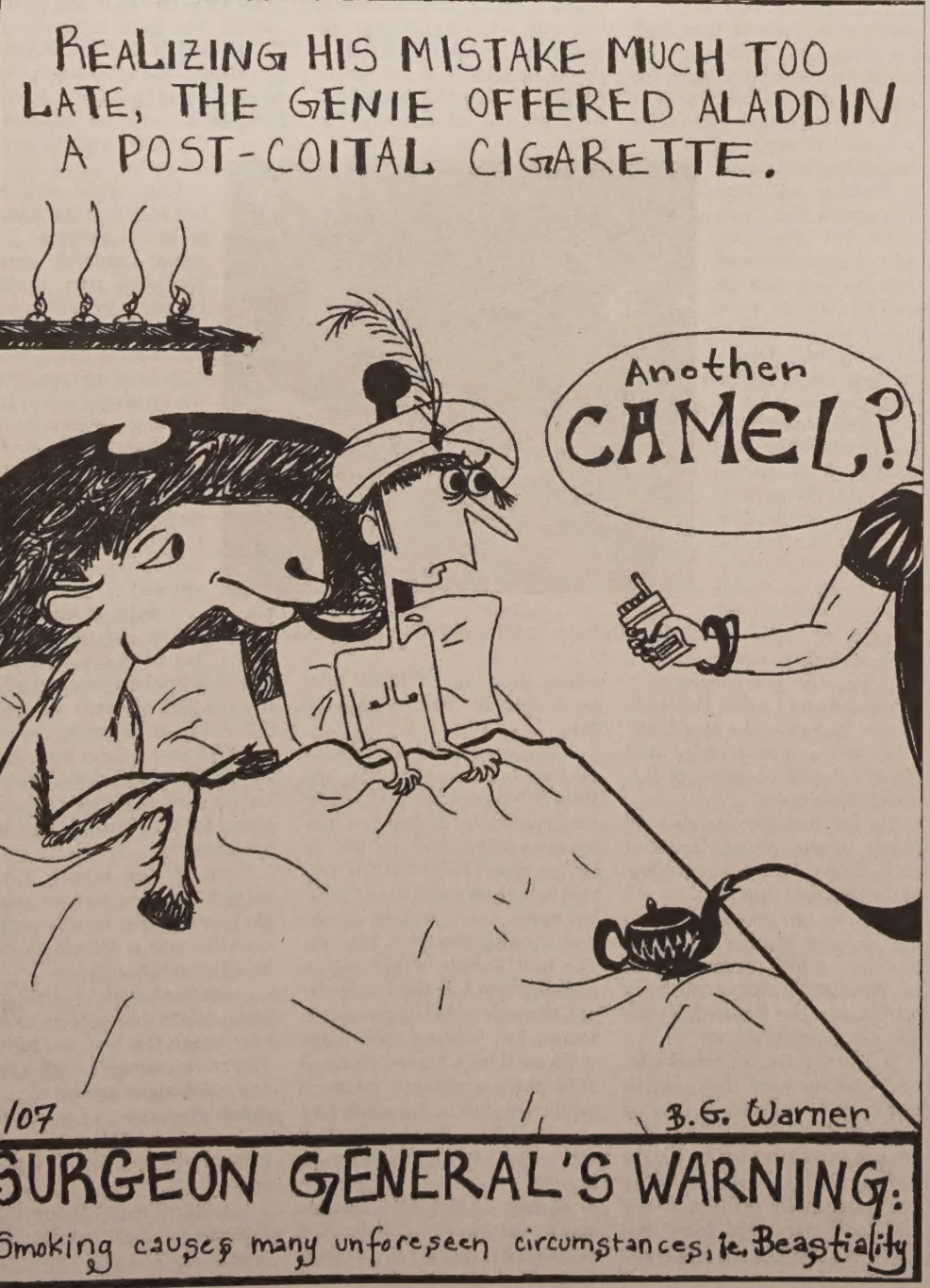
Random Information

by Natachi Chukumerije



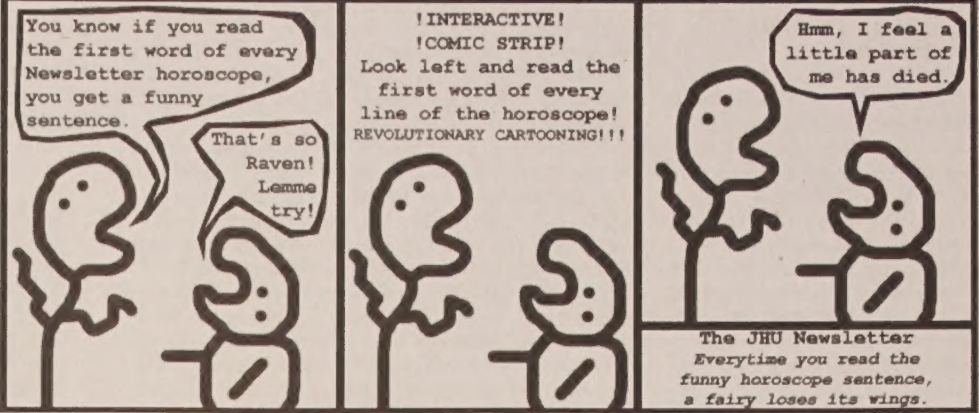
Third Person Objective

by B.G. Warner



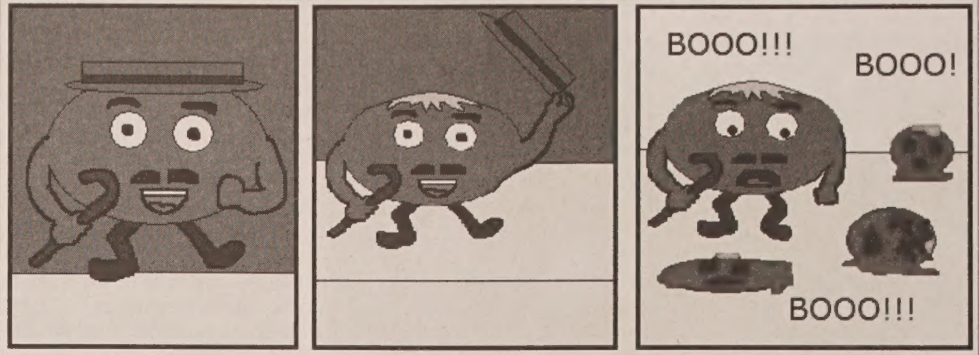
Comicali

by Joe Micali



Wasted Ink

by Nate Min



Sudoku

			5	8	6			
				3		4	8	
			7		2	9	6	
		8	6				7	9
	9						1	
6	2				3	5		
	5	9	2		8			
	8	6		7				
			3	1	9			

The Weekend of Adar Eisenbruch

This past weekend, I participated in two shows here on campus. The *Johns Hopkins News-Letter* — this very one! — shamefully failed to review either of them. Knowing that you'll all share my outrage, I've decided to gamely step in and fill that void. Thus, I humbly present my review of this weekend's theatrical happenings:

On Friday evening, the Buttered Niblets presented their final improv comedy show of the semester. Fans of the group — of which there are thousands, many of whom are sexually willing — have come to expect an extraordinarily high level of comedic quality from the Buttered Niblets. They are renowned throughout Baltimore and the Milky Way for their wit, creativity, energetic yet appropriately subtle physical comedy and delightfully large penises (especially the girls).

Fortunately, the Niblets did not disappoint this time around. Their show was chock full of hilarity, antics, impressive group work and high-brow poop jokes that left the audience gasping with laughter and begging for more (a reaction that they must be used to by now, especially given their mammoth phalluses). Each of the Buttered Niblets displayed a level of skill that can surely only be achieved through a divine convergence of natural comedic talent and many hard hours of devoted, intensive training.

Amid the swirling ocean of talent that is the Buttered Niblets, one improviser stood out among them all. Adar Eisenbruch [Ed: we're just amazed that it even took him this long to mention himself] was the brightest star of all. He clearly possesses a level of comedic timing, energy, spontaneity and originality that had probably never before been witnessed in Arellano Theater or perhaps on this planet.

One can only wonder what heights of stardom await this

talented young man. The next Steve Carell? The next Conan O'Brien? The next Matt LeBlanc? The next Stevie Seinpriorlen? [Ed: We think he's trying to reference the hypothetical lovechild of Steve Martin, Eddie Murphy, Jerry Seinfeld, Richard Pryor and Woody Allen, but it's hard to tell through the cloud of obnoxious self-love]. Additionally, although the Buttered Niblets show did not involve any nudity at all, senior Adar Eisenbruch also deserves credit for the impressive comedic stylings of his massive penis.

On Saturday, Witness Theater staged the results of their latest 24-Hour Theater Experiment. The goal of the Experiment is to produce four original short plays from scratch within a span of 24

hours. harbor the capacity for evil? Can animals talk? This reviewer was amazed at the extent to which the play managed to balance comedy with serious theater. Is there anything that these promising young playwrights (but mostly Adar Eisenbruch) can't do?

Even though *The Mountain* was superb overall, it did, as is inevitable with any script written in one night, have a few weak moments. These parts were almost certainly written by Sal Gentile.

In addition to having co-/mostly written "The Mountain," Eisenbruch also gave voice to one of the play's main characters. The entire four-person cast was very talented and turned in performances that any actor would have been proud to call their own. While each of them displayed great comedic skill, as well as dramatic aplomb, one actor stood out among them all.

Eisenbruch displayed such an incredible facility for acting that any serious observer must contemplate the possibility that Eisenbruch is actually the earthly form of Dionysus, Greek patron god of theater. Particularly impressive about his performance is the fact that, despite having been heard but never seen during the course of the play, the audience was left in utter awe of the profundity of his penis.

On Sunday night, Eisenbruch turned in another fine performance as he wrote the humor column you are currently reading. While the *News-Letter* presented several formidable pieces, one column stood out among them all.

Eisenbruch's column was the most enjoyable, fascinating series of thoughts that have ever been printed. Though the subject matter presented him with countless opportunities for irritating and immature self-aggrandizement, Eisenbruch thankfully handled the entire affair with his characteristic modesty, self-deprecating sense of humor and giant penis.

Adar Eisenbruch

Let's Talk

SPORTS

Remembering Sean Taylor and looking forward

The passing of Sean Taylor, the free safety for the Redskins, was a tragedy, but his presence will always be felt in Landover

By **DEMIAN KENDALL**
Sports Editor

It's been over a week since Washington Redskin Sean Taylor was shot and killed defending his girlfriend and newborn daughter in his Southern Florida home. The news of his death sent a shock through the football community that bore the force of one of his tackles. The Redskins' players, coaches and fans are still reeling from last Tuesday's tragedy. Taylor was a dominant presence on and off the field, a physical threat to any receiver or back who came his way and a motivating force to his fellow players.

The effect he had on his team was made clear as the Skins took the field against Buffalo this past Sunday for their first game since the loss of Taylor. After Washington kicked off to Buffalo to start the game, the Redskin defense took the field with a ten-man set. Taylor's fellow strong safety LaRon Landry stood alone at the rear of the defensive set, and it was clear what the Redskins were trying to say. Something was missing. Although Taylor's replacement, Reed Doughty, took the field on the following play, it was clear that the void following Sean Taylor's death will not be filled any time soon.

The Redskins not only lost a

key player from their team, they also lost a friend and an icon of the organization. After recording his first catch of the game, wide receiver Santana Moss pounded his chest and flipped a three-finger gesture toward the sky, honoring number 21. After scoring the Redskins' only touchdown of the game, running back Clinton Portis, who was also Taylor's teammate at the University of Miami, lifted up his jersey, revealing a Sean Taylor T-shirt underneath.

The Redskins are paying their respects, but what does the loss of Sean Taylor mean for the organization? Will the Redskins be crippled by the loss or will it drive them to succeed in his honor?

My guess is the latter. Over the summer, the New England Patriots lost one of their defensive backs, Marquise Hill, in a jet-skiing accident. With the 2007 season dedicated to his memory, the Pats fight on, with number 91 stickers on the back of their helmets. In Monday night's game against Baltimore, New England players had a number 21 sticker affixed right above the 91. I envision Taylor's memory will survive similarly to Hill's. Sean Taylor was a motivating force when he was on the field, and he will continue to be one now that he's gone. His spirit will live on in FedEx Field and his drive to succeed will be passed on to those who played alongside him.

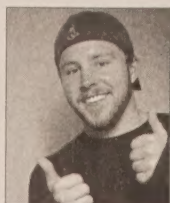
Taylor was also a huge part of what it meant to be a Redskins fan. Last season, I went to see the Redskins play the Giants with my friend Justin, who was of course decked out in his white Sean

Taylor jersey. We were watching the team warm up, when Justin turned to me and said, "Just look at Sean Taylor. He can do anything. The Giants are terrified right now." Throughout the entire game, I would turn to him and say, "What do you think?" and he'd reply "Sean Taylor touchdown," even if the 'Skins were on offense. That was the effect he had on those who watched him play.

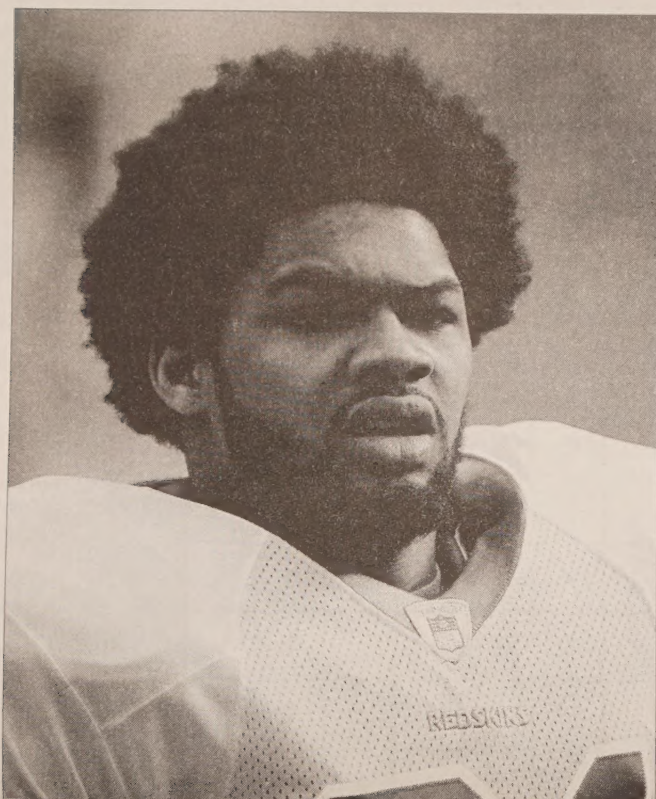
During the Buffalo game, the parking lot was packed with cars, and on the windows of many were written the words "RIP #21." Many fans even painted the message on their faces. The stadium was filled with white, burgundy and black Taylor jerseys. Outside FedEx Field, a temporary memorial was constructed in Taylor's honor. Hundreds of fans gathered by it to pay their respects, leaving flowers, candles, footballs and even personal messages and letters to their fallen hero.

But Taylor's memorial stretched much farther than Landover, Md. Teams across the NFL stuck number 21 stickers to their helmets. Moments of silence in Taylor's honor were held after the national anthem. These signs of respect display something very profound about the NFL community. They are opponents; they train year-round to defeat each other, but at the end of the day, they're still part of the community. They're co-workers. Tensions may grow between them, but events such as the loss of Sean Taylor affect them all.

I'm not a Redskins fan, but it was always a pleasure to watch Sean Taylor play. The hits he laid out in his career were some of the hardest I've seen, and the presence he upheld within the Redskins organization was inspiring. Living in Eastern Maryland for almost half my life, I saw the effect that he had on many of my friends, and I can say with utmost confidence that he will never be forgotten, and he will always live on in the spirit of the old red and gold.



Demian Kendall
Out of Left Field



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Sean Taylor watches each minute of the game with utmost concern for his team.

The Johns Hopkins News-Letter



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Wrestling hits stumbling block at Petrofes tourney

By **MIKE SUMNER**
For The News-Letter

The Petrofes tournament, held at Messiah College, is undoubtedly the most difficult tournament in which the wrestling team participates. Not only does it bring together the top three teams in the Centennial Conference — Hopkins, Muhlenberg and Ursinus — but also several nationally ranked top 30 teams in Heidelberg (4th), Cortland (14th), Brockport (15th) and SUNY Oneonta (27th). When all was said and done, the Jays took seventh of 13 teams with 57 points, just one place behind conference rivals Muhlenberg, but several points ahead of rivals Ursinus and Gettysburg. Heidelberg placed first with 162 points.

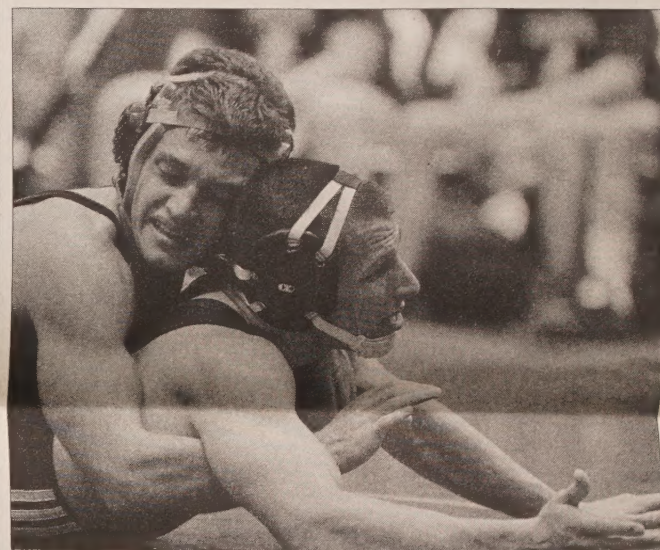
The grueling two-day tournament took its toll on all who competed. Only the surviving eight in each weight class from the first day made it into competition on the second. Unfortunately for the Jays, they saw most of their wrestlers bow out on the first day. But the two Blue Jay wrestlers that made it to the second day placed second in their respective weight classes: Eric Fishel at 184 pounds and Tyler Schmidt at 197 pounds.

Fishel rebounded from his fifth-place finish at the Red Dragon Invitational last week,

placing second overall at 184 pounds. After a bye in the first round, Fishel scored a pin over Wala Canario of SUNY Oneonta at 3:13. In the next round, he edged out a 6-5 decision over seventh-seed Josh Bloom of Brockport. He earned his berth in the finals with a shutout 6-0 win over Kirk Adamson of Washington & Lee. Unfortunately, he was unable to defeat Elliot Smith from Springfield College, losing by fall at 4:16.

Schmidt entered the tournament with a perfect 8-0 record on the season. From his second seed, Schmidt began his tournament the same way he began his last tournament, with a dominating pin, this time over Eric Seltzer of Kings College. Schmidt followed that pin up with two more, defeating Tyler Wolf of Ursinus College and Josh Christopher of Washington & Lee. In the finals, Schmidt went up against top-ten nationally ranked Ryan Fogliano of Heidelberg College. It was a toughly fought match, but Schmidt surrendered the 12-3 major decision, his first loss of the year.

The Jays will be back in action on the Jan. 8, returning to Messiah College to take on Messiah as well as SUNY Morrisville and York College in a dual meet. The Jays, who are 0-1 in dual meets this season, look to get back into the win column.



CONOR KEVIN/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Freshman 157-pounder Eric Levenseller works inside wrist control on his opponent.

ESPN honors former Hopkins coach

CONTINUED FROM B12

planet should spend time each day loving and reflecting. This was a man who would die less than two months later, but who still could say with a grin on his face, six minutes into the speech, "that screen is flashing up there '30 seconds' like I care about that screen up there. I got tumors all over my body and I'm worried about some guy in the back going '30 seconds!'" following it up with an Italian hand gesture.

Valvano must have known that these were going to be his last moments in the national spotlight. With this in mind, he used this speech as an opportunity, in an admirably and touchingly selfless manner, to announce the founding, with help from ESPN, of the Jimmy V Foundation for Cancer Research, so that "someone else might survive, and might prosper, and might actually be cured of this dreaded disease."

He finished the speech with words strong enough to send chills down the emotional spine of the strongest human.

"Cancer can take away all of my physical abilities. It cannot touch my mind, it cannot touch my heart and it cannot touch my soul. And those three things are going to carry on forever."

It seems hard for those who have lost someone they cherish to cancer to understand how he can remain positive in the face of such an adversity. As Jimmy V puts it in his speech "Nothing has changed for me! I'm a very emotional, passionate man." But that is exactly why this speech is

one of the greatest of all time. If this man, who was dying at cancer at the age of 47, with three young daughters, could remain positive, it should serve as motivation to all of those fighting

"Jim Valvano was something special. We were fortunate to have him. He was just a great personality. We all thought that he would end up with the New York Knicks — he had the brains, the pizzazz and the sense of humor."

Scott could also attest to Valvano's skilled oratorical abilities. "He could absolutely spellbind you with stories. He could be telling stories and you would end up holding your sides with how he presented the messages he was trying to get across. In his speeches, he would refer to his time at Hopkins as noting that his main responsibility was being in charge of 'selling tickets during the lacrosse games.'"

I feel it is fitting that nearly 40 years after his head coaching stint here, synergy between basketball and medical research has come full circle at Hopkins. Several Hopkins researchers have been named V Foundation Scholars, and as such have been awarded grants for breakthroughs in cancer research.

Even though Jimmy V was only at Hopkins for one year, I am honored that such an inspiring man was a member of the Blue Jay community.

As someone who has recently lost a relative to cancer, I know how tough the loss can be. But Valvano's courage, high spirits and selflessness can be an inspiration everyone — I know they are to me. And that is why his legacy will live on for ages to come.

To learn more about the V Foundation, check out <http://www.jimmyv.org>.



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Jim Valvano hangs from the rim after his historic NCAA victory.

cancer, and all of those who know someone battling the disease.

Valvano coached at Hopkins for only one season, during the 1969-1970 school year. As a novice 22-year-old in his first collegiate varsity coaching job, he led the team to a 10-9 finish. This may not seem particularly notable, but it was, in fact, Hopkins's first winning season in 24 years. The next season he became an assistant coach at the University of Connecticut. While people associate Jim Valvano with many different things, basketball coach at Hopkins is certainly far down the list. But in Valvano's lone year here, it was pretty evident to those who knew him that he was special.

Former Hopkins lacrosse coach and athletic director Bob Scott spoke very fondly of him.

SPORTS

W. basketball dazzles the Garnet, 78-45

By **MAX DWORIN**
News-Letter Staff Writer

Coming off a three-game losing streak for the first time since the 2000-2001 season, the women's basketball team needed a win in the worst way on Saturday at Goldfarb Gymnasium.

The visiting Swarthmore Garnet (2-3, 1-1) felt the desperation that only a losing skid of such large proportions can create as Hopkins's suffocating defense stymied the Garnet offense early and strong play by the Jays down low propelled them to an important 78-45 conference win.

Hopkins's game plan was clear from the opening tip: Find Karen Berk. The senior forward is fifth

all-time on Swarthmore's career scoring leaders list and came into the game averaging 19.3 points. She needed to be neutralized in order to ensure a win.

Hopkins started a taller lineup to handle Berk, going with three forwards and two guards instead of their normal three guards and two forwards.

"I think we were very ready to come out differently as a team," junior guard/forward Sarah DePaolo said.

"We needed to come out a little more active than we had been and hassle their guards, not let them get any second chances or rebounds. Our main goal, though, was to keep it out of [Berk's] hands."

Hopkins scored first on a jumper by senior forward Andrea Dodrill but the Garnet took the lead three minutes in, going up 3-2. Fifteen seconds after taking the lead, however, junior guard Jonay Foster nailed a three-point-er to put the Jays back on top.

The Garnet would never lead again. Berk did not even score her first basket until over 10 minutes had elapsed in the first half and Hopkins had jumped out to a 10-point lead.

"We knew they had a couple kids but we were concerned about [Berk] from the very beginning," said head coach Nancy Funk, now in her 22nd season with the Jays.

"I thought we did a really good job on her."

Hopkins continued to build on its lead heading into halftime and went into the break up 41-22 and dominating.

Even though the Jays were up big, however, coach Funk warned the team to come out in the second half as if it were a new game.

And it was a new game. The Garnet managed to carve out a little space down low and chip the Hopkins lead down to just 9 points, a far cry from the 19-point deficit Swarthmore faced at halftime.

"We were just not gunning as hard," DePaolo said of her team's play early in the second half. "We let them get too many easy lay-ups."

Just as soon as it looked like it was turning into a close contest, however, the Lady Jays reverted to their previous game strategy. Hopkins dominated the glass, out-rebounding Swarthmore 60-45 in the afternoon. Most importantly, though, the Hopkins women established an impressive 33-16 edge in offensive boards.

"Our players made good adjustments," Funk said. "We got key boards and hit key buckets. Hopefully it's a confidence-builder."

Hopkins put up 15 unanswered points to end the game, capped off by sophomore guard Leigh McAdams's first three-pointer of the season. The Lady Jays sent a clear message to the rest of the Centennial Conference that the team will be a powerful force in the 2007-2008 season.

Both Burton and Phillips turned in double-doubles in the game, each scoring a team-high 12 points and grabbing 11 and 12 rebounds, respectively. For Burton, it was her first collegiate double-double and the best game of her young career.

"It felt good," Burton said of her achievement. "But most importantly it was a very good team effort."

That team effort was epitomized by DePaolo, who scored seven points and had nine rebounds in 18 minutes off the bench for her best game as a Blue Jay.

"Sarah [DePaolo] was a real inspiration," Funk said. "We really got contributions from everyone."

"It's nice to come off the bench and surprise them," DePaolo said. "It's almost easier to come off the bench because the players on the other team think of you as a bench player."

Hopkins, now 1-1 in the Centennial Conference, has two more conference games on the road against Gettysburg and Dickinson before heading into holiday break. "It's the same mentality for us going into both of these games," DePaolo said.

"Team defense is our biggest goal and keeping the turnovers down. Basically we need to make sure we are not playing their game but playing our own," she said.

Tuesday, the Jays didn't fare as well, falling to Gettysburg 68-38.

Hopkins plans to keep DePaolo's words in mind as they travel to Carlisle, Pennsylvania on Friday to face Dickinson College.

M. basketball swats down Swarthmore, 73-59

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B12
game. Polster would end up with 20 points for the game, 13 of which were scored in the second half, as he helped the Jays shoot 48.1 percent from the floor and 71.4 percent from the free throw line. On the other side of the basketball, the Jays stepped it up in defense, forcing 18 Garnet turnovers, and even though they trailed in rebounds, they only allowed 10 turnovers of their own. After completely dominating the game in the second half, the clock hit zero with a score of 73-59 in favor of the Jays.

Many Hopkins players showed exceptional performances. Polster was honored with both the Centennial Conference and PrestoSports/Provident Pride of Maryland Honor Roll on Monday. Junior guard Collin Kamm played very well for the Jays, hitting double digits with 13 points. Kamm also showed an

impressive two steals and three assists, and he currently ranks sixth in steals in the Centennial Conference. Sophomore forward Andrew Farber-Miller didn't disappoint either; he added to the statistics for the Jays with a team-high seven rebounds and seven points.

Hopkins has a busy schedule coming up to close out the 2007 year. They face a pair of road games in the upcoming weeks; Gettysburg on Wednesday, Dec. 5, and Dickinson on Saturday, Dec. 8. Despite the fact that the Jays beat Gettysburg the last time the two teams met, Gettysburg (4-1, 1-1) leads the lifetime series with Hopkins 41-25. Since the establishment of the Centennial Conference, however, Hopkins is 6-7 in games at Gettysburg. Gettysburg suffered its first loss of the season last Saturday, so with Hopkins coming off a win, it should fuel

the team to have an exciting game, and hopefully a victory.

In terms of the game against Dickinson (4-2, 1-1), Hopkins leads the lifetime series between the two, 35-23. The Jays have won the last 5 meetings and 10 of the last 11. In fact, Hopkins has a record of 11-3 in Carlisle since the 1993-94 season. The Dec. 8 match-up between the Jays and the Devils will be an important one in determining where Hopkins stands in the conference as well as where they may end up in 2008.



CONOR KEVIT/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
Freshman Lyndsay Burton reaches for one of her 11 rebounds against Swarthmore.

Men's fencing looking sharp with 6-1 weekend record

Hopkins men's fencing team falls to UPenn, then sticks it to Sacred Heart, Stevens Tech, Hunter, NJIT, Rutgers, Yeshiva

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B12
Einsiedler. The epee team consisted of freshmen Thomas Roman and Nick Krywopusk, sophomores Harry Oppenheim and James Pearse and junior Dan Zielinski. Freshmen Michael Fellows and Max Wieder and seniors Aaron Fernandes and co-captain Jacob Sand made up the sabre team.

Fellows demonstrated a smooth transition from the epee as he competed for the first time with the sabre.

The Hopkins men first faced off against host UPenn, a strong Division-I team. Unfortunately, the Quakers doubled the Blue Jays' efforts, defeating them 19-8.

However, the Hopkins men rebounded quickly to fight off Division-III Stevens and Division-I Sacred Heart, defeating both teams. Both of the matches resulted in a 19-8 score, just as the Hopkins-Penn match. Except

this time, it was the Blue Jays who came out on top.

On Sunday, the men moved to compete at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, N.J. They posted a successful day as they went undefeated.

The Jays showed their dominance first by beating the Rutgers club team 20-7.

They went on to overwhelm Division-III Yeshiva University and Division-II NJIT by a score of 26-1 in both matches. The men wrapped up the day defeating

Division-III Hunter College, 25-2.

Coach Austin Young has set up a rigorous schedule for the Hopkins men. Many of their meets this year have the Blue Jays facing up against strong Division-I teams. Their performance against these teams can help earn the Blue Jays a national ranking.

Sophomore Paul Nunley believes that task is within the team's grasp.

"Based on our performance this past weekend, I think we can get ranked this year," Nunley went on to lay out some of the other goals for the Blue Jay squad.

"Last year we were able to send David Ferguson to the NCAA final, where he took 13th place. I think it's possible that three or four people can go to the finals this year," he said.

Sophomore Harry Oppenheim praised the contributions made by the freshmen this past weekend.

"The freshmen this year are a very good addition to the team," Oppenheim said.

"They help strengthen all the squads, especially epee."

The Hopkins men and women look to continue their promising seasons over the winter break. The women compete next at the Penn Multi-Meets on Jan. 12, while the men compete at the Philadelphia Invitational on the same day.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK KRISTIN PHILLIPS, WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

'Tis the season for Kris Kringle and Kris Phillips

By **MARY DOMAN**
Sports Editor

"Do you believe in Santa Claus?"

My tone was serious, the question cold and direct. Her response rose to the occasion, straightforward and unafraid.

"Absolutely."

This is Kristin Phillips, junior forward, co-captain and Santa Claus-believer of the women's basketball team.

Now that the holiday season is upon us, she's worked extra hard to be a good girl. And by good, I mean scoring 12 points and 11 rebounds against Swarthmore to aid the Jays' 78-45 victory on Saturday.

But she's still trying to do better for Santa. Though this past weekend was great, she's ultimately trying to surpass her greatest basketball achievement — "my career highlight of scoring 1000 points in high school." Can she do it? Anything's possible with a little holiday magic, right? Then again, Phillips isn't one to rely on silly superstitions when it comes to ensuring a stuffed stocking on Christmas morning.

"I don't really have any superstitions," she said. "But Caitlin Sloane likes to wear her Disney World sweatshirt on gamedays. And Sarah DePaolo likes to wear her underwear on inside-out."

Even though she may not be-

lieve in their lucky rituals, Phillips still loves her teammates almost as much as she loves Christmas.

"You know, I'd say our team is like a bunch of reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh," she said. As reindeer, Phillips puts senior forward Andrea Dodrill at front.

"Andrea's like Rudolph, leading the way." On the court, though, there's no question that Phillips is in front, alongside co-captains Dodrill and junior guard Jenna Berninger.

Returning to the reindeer metaphor, though, the Hopkins sleigh holds two victories so far. However, it's early in the season, and Phillips and her team still have 19 games ahead of them.

The tough course ahead doesn't scare Phillips, who's been in love with basketball since the holiday season of her fourth-grade year.

She was afraid that maybe St. Nick wouldn't pull through for her that year, because, "I realized I wasn't good at reading, writing or arithmetic." Concerned she might be labeled a "bad girl," she started a basketball career that secured her spot on the "good girl" roster for quite some time.

But basketball skills aren't the only good thing Father Christmas sees in Phillips. Even when she's not shooting hoops, she's checking twice to make sure she's good from dawn till

dusk. "I like to wake up with the sun, put on a cup of joe, run five miles, walk my elderly neighbor's dog, read to underprivileged children and then I'm ready to start a full day of classes."

This hard-working attitude isn't unusual for Phillips. "She

though, Phillips likes to relax and embrace the holiday season.

"I'm looking forward to spending time with my family. My sister Callie and I leave milk and cookies out for Santa and a big carrot for Rudolph," she said. "We do it up right at the Phillips



CONOR KEVIT/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

plays with a lot of heart ... she hustles and isn't scared to leave it all on the court," sophomore guard Britni Lonesome said.

When she's not running five miles, playing basketball, walking dogs, going to class or reading to underprivileged children,

house."

Between her contributions to the court and to the fireplace this Christmas season, both Hopkins and Santa are pleased to include Kristin Phillips at the top of their "good list" this season.

VITAL STATISTICS

Year: Junior

Major: Political Science

Position: Forward

Hopkins Highlights: Split 24 points and 23 rebounds with freshman forward Lynsday Burton.

SPORTS

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1956 – “The Blood in the Water Match,” possibly the most famous water polo match of all time, was held between Hungary and the USSR. Hungary was under Soviet control, staging a violent revolution for freedom. Hungary won the match by a score of 4-0, securing both an athletic and political victory.

CALENDAR

There are no home events scheduled until the men's and women's swimming matches on Jan. 12.

M. basketball secures first conference victory

By KATIE MOODY
News-Letter Staff Writer

The Hopkins men's basketball team improved their record on Saturday, Dec. 1, when they dribbled past Swarthmore 73-59 in an all-out court battle at the Goldfarb Gymnasium. The Jays are now sporting a record of 4-3 (1-1 in-conference), the best start that they've had since the 2004-05 season. The win on Saturday made it the seventh straight against Swarthmore (2-3, 0-2 in-conference), and team is ready to face the difficult end-of-the-year challenges that will be played on the road.

Despite both teams' attempts at taking an early lead and maintaining it throughout the game, the Garnet and the Jays volleyed back and forth for the lead in the first three minutes of play. They traded leads when finally sophomore guard Pat O'Connell put and end to it when he sunk a shot through the net for three points to give Hopkins a 7-6 lead. With this lead, the Jays kept the momentum going with a 16-3 point run, as they extended their lead by 11 to 20-9 with only 12 minutes left in the half. Swarthmore tried their best to turn the game in their favor by the half, when Raul Ordonez and Steve Wolf each hit both their lay-ups to close the gap to only six points with just ten minutes left.

The Jays then re-rallied to extend the lead by 10, but the Garnet filed it down to just five, making it a close 27-22 game. Back and forth, offensive and defensive sides of the ball were earning every inch, and that came to a head when Hopkins senior guard Doug Polster teamed up with freshman forward John Alberici to put three off the glass into the net.



Sophomore forward Adam Baumgartner fights off three Swarthmore defenders to pull in a rebound in Saturday's home game.

However, Swarthmore would not let up. They responded with free throws and a three-point shot at 3:43, which brought them within five. But Hopkins junior guard Scott Weisnefeld and sophomore forward Adam Baumgartner teamed up to orchestrate a rebound-assist that resulted in a

three-point shot at the buzzer to close the half at 35-26 in the Jays' favor.

It was all Hopkins when the second half started. The Jays quickly took advantage of their lead, and didn't look back. They quickly pounced on Swarthmore with a 9-2 scoring run to take

a 16-point lead, and from that point on, they kept the double-digit lead for the rest of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE B11

Fencing teams are a new force in the conference

By MIKE YUAN
News-Letter Staff Writer

The men's and women's fencing teams continued their strong seasons, each competing this past weekend in separate tournaments. The common theme in each of the tournaments seemed to be strong freshmen adjusting well to collegiate fencing.

The women competed at the 76th annual NIWFA Christmas invitational on Sunday morning. The event was held at the Cobra Fencing Academy in Jersey City, N.J. The open event drew 129 competitors, representing 30 different colleges and universities, including powerhouses like Temple, Rutgers and Stevens. The entrants had to endure three rounds of pools in order to advance to a final round, consisting of nine finalist fencers in each of the weapons.

Last year at the event, the women were able to place five fencers in the finals. This year, they matched that number, but improved in terms of placement. The depth of the squad was seen as the Jays had finalists in each of the three weapons.

In the foil, junior Grace Fried placed second overall, followed closely by sophomore Katie Kim and freshman Sophia de Bene-

dictis, who finished sixth and seventh respectively. In the epee, junior captain Cindy Liu fenced her way to an eighth-place finish. Freshman Alysson Mondoro was the lone Blue Jay in the finals for the sabre, in which she finished ninth.

Alysson, a walk-on to the team who had never fenced before coming to Hopkins, was able to put her newly-learned skills to the test. “It was exciting to place,” Mondoro said.

It was exciting to place. I'm really looking forward to the rest of the season.

— FRESHMAN ALYSSON MONDORO

“I'm really looking forward to the rest of the season.”

Sophomore Katie Kim summed up the hopes of the women's team for the remainder of the season.

“Our goal is to keep up the strong performances we've shown so far.”

On the men's side, this past weekend brought two separate tournaments. On Saturday, the Jays were at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia for the Penn Multi-Meet. It was the first meet of the year, as the first two competitions at Temple and Penn State were open events for individuals.

The foil team included sophomores Paul Nunley and Ian McCue, and juniors David Ferguson, Ben Dorfman and Jimmy

CONTINUED ON PAGE B11

ESPN honors former Hopkins coach

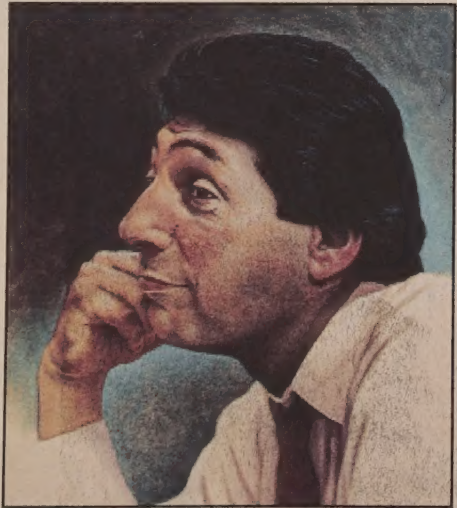
By ERIC GOODMAN
News-Letter Staff Writer

Hopkins is known as a breeding ground for successful professionals. Whether these professionals are doctors, academics, researchers, engineers or lacrosse players, Hopkins has gained a reputation for placing highly skilled people into high-ranking workforce positions. But is Hopkins also a breeding ground for legendary basketball coaches?

Initial research breeds one positive result. Can you guess who it is? I'll give you three clues.

He coached his team to an upset victory in the 1983 NCAA Division I men's basketball championship game. At the 1993 ESPY Awards he gave one of the most noteworthy and memorable speeches by any sports figure. He has a cancer research foundation established in his memory, which to date has raised over \$70 million.

The man is James “Jim” Valvano — affectionately referred to by sports junkies as Jimmy V. Valvano. He was the head basketball coach at North Carolina State University during the 1980s, winning a national championship and amassing 209 wins. He had several head coaching stops, including Bucknell, Iona and Hopkins.



COURTESY OF HTTP://JIMMYV.ORG

This painting of Valvano has become an icon of his cause.

[cancer] Foundation.” The week was kicked off with an airing of Jimmy V's legendary 1993 speech at the first ESPY Awards. Before you proceed to read the rest of this column, I strongly encourage you to watch the speech in its

entirety on YouTube. It will take 10 minutes, and I guarantee you it will be ten of the most reflective and emotionally gripping minutes of your week.

For those of you deterred by the speech's length, try to remember the last time someone accepting an award made a speech that lasted longer than “I want to thank God, my family and my agent.” This should immediately tell you how significant this speech is. Valvano, who was dying from terminal bone cancer, knew that “time was very precious.” His speech was special; not because it was a sympathetic or a somber tearjerker, but because of how he beamed about how happy he was to still be alive and how fortunate he was that he could still cherish those around him.

It was not so much what he said in the speech, but the tone with which the speech was presented. An often energetic and emphatic coach (possibly the second most famous Jim Valvano clip is one of him running around on the court after his championship victory looking for someone to hug), this speech resonates with energy. He talks with jocularly and a smile on his face about his early coaching career, the life lessons he has learned and how everyone on this

CONTINUED ON PAGE B10

INSIDE

Wrestling: Jays struggle at Petrofes

This weekend, the wrestling team faced some of the toughest competition they will face all year. Hopkins did manage to send two wrestlers to the finals. Page B10.

Women's basketball: Destruction in Goldfarb

The Lady Jays secured their second win of the season this Saturday in a game against Swarthmore that can only be referred to as total annihilation. What lies ahead? Page B11.

Athlete of the Week: Kristin Phillips

This women's basketball star gives Mary Doman the scoop on superstition, Santa Claus and of course, what she knows best, tearing up the basketball courts. Page B11.

WHO SAYS WINTER IS THE TIME TO CHILL?!



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